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CHOSÖN

THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM



THE "FRAGRANT IRIS"

Chosön

THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM

A SKETCH OF KOREA

BY

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ILLUSTRATED

FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR



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PREFACE.

ONE evening in August, 1883, I found myself arriving in Tokio, after a journey into the interior of Japan. The thousand lights and lanterns of the great city, as I sped through its miles of streets in a jinrikisha, never seemed so brilliant nor so welcoming before. I felt I had reached home. Of leaving it, of sailing for America, I had at that moment about as much idea as you have, good reader, of setting out to-morrow for Kamchatka. Coming events cast no shadows before them; for all was one vast shadow,—night. Four days from that time I was on the broad Pacific with the Korean Special Mission to the United States, and a little more than two weeks later I entered my native land as a foreigner.

It was at the end of October that we set sail again from San Francisco for Yokohama. A long passage across the Pacific and unavoidable delays in Japan made it the middle of December before we at last reached Korea. There, in its capital, Söul, as the guest of his Majesty, I spent the winter.

Now that you and I, indulgent reader, have journeyed so many thousand miles in company, we should surely have learned to know each other; for nothing, we both admit, so reveals character as travel,—except marriage.

I would add two notes. In the first place, I wish to put in a plea for the right pronunciation of Korean words. In the transliteration of the Korean alphabet I have followed the scheme suggested by Messrs. Aston, Satow, and Chamberlain, the pioneers of the subject. The simple vowels *a*, *i*, *o*, and *u* are to be pronounced as in Italian. Ö, an exceedingly interesting Korean vowel, has a sound which varies from the French *e* mute, through short *u*, to a degenerated *o*. The best sound,

on the whole, to represent it is the German *ö* (*o* umlaut). What have been written *e*, *è*, and *é* were originally Korean diphthongs, and are still so written, *ăi*, *ai*, and *oi;* but they are now pronounced as single vowel sounds, akin to the sounds the letters represent in French. The transliterated consonants are to be pronounced for the most part as in English, — the principal exceptions being *r*, which is a general, not a special liquid (that is, it suggests either an *r*, an *l*, or an *n*, according to position); an intercalated *h*, which has the effect of increasing the aspiration of the preceding letter, — as, for instance, *Whang*, *Chhung;* and lastly, a reduplication of certain letters, which simply increases the intensity of their pronunciation. Other foreign words have been spelled according to the consensus of scholars on the subject; for this reason *Korea* has replaced *Corea*, and in *Manchuria* all the vowels have the Italian sound.

Secondly, I would send with this a note of thanks. The thanks would have taken the form of a dedication had the names not seemed too many to share one book. To William Sturgis Bigelow, Gustavus Goward, Basil Hall Chamberlain, Ernest F. Fenollosa, and Edward S. Morse, I am indebted for kindness and help thanks cannot express: I would offer them instead this sketch. To Miyaoka Tsunejiro, Yu Kil Chun, Cheu Kyŏng Sok, Ni Si Ryom, Kim Nak Chip, Min Yŏng Ik, and Sŏ Kwang Pŏm, I am under the greatest obligations. I would also thank most warmly Hon. Lucius H. Foote, C. L. Scudder, Esq., Herr P. G. von Möllendorff, T. Koyabashi, Esq., and Y. S. Yoshida, Esq., for the many happy days they gave me in both thought and feeling, the remembrance of which has lately, unhappily, been saddened by the death of Mrs. Foote; while to Hong Yŏng Sik, the loyal friend, the true patriot, and at last the political martyr, I can now only ascribe a memory. To the Forbes Albertype Company I desire to express my thanks for the manner in which they have reproduced from my negatives the accompanying pictures. Finally, I would thank Mr. Stevens, of the University Press, for his many able suggestions.

Boston, *November*, 1885.

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THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM.

CHAPTER I.

WHERE THE DAY BEGINS.

IT is fortunate that the one hundred and eightieth meridian falls where it does. From Siberia to the Antarctic Continent this imaginary line traverses nothing but water. The only land which it passes at all near is one of the archipelagoes of the South Pacific; and there it divides but a handful of volcanoes and coral reefs from the main group. These islands are even more unimportant to the world than insignificant in size. Those who tenant them are few, and those who are bound to these few still fewer.

The line is not only imaginary; it has not even an astronomical reason for its existence, like the equator. It is purely and entirely an arbitrary convention; and yet its position is of exceeding importance to mankind. From the very convenience of this position we are apt to forget its value; for the line is the great day-origin. It sets, not the time of day merely, but the day itself. At the line two days meet. There, though time flows ceaselessly on, occurs that unnatural yet unavoidable jump of twenty-four hours; and no one is there to be startled by the fact, — no one to be perplexed in trying to reconcile the two incongruities, continuous time and discontinuous day. There is nothing but the ocean; and that is tenantless.

Had it been otherwise, — had the line crossed some continent where man dwelt, — there might have been two great towns, ten miles apart, with different days yet the same hour. "Nothing new under the sun!" Why, two days would be born with every sunrise. And persons induced to do so, from financial or other causes, could go skipping across the line, doubling certain days of their weeks while they forever obliterated others.

Now, as we pass this meridian westward, we simply drop a day into the deep; and but few of us pause to consider that we have in reality buried a cause of strife, — an immaterial something which, had it not been for the uninhabited ocean, would have thrown the world into inextricable confusion. The point at issue is nothing less than the agreement upon a common day for the whole world.

The form of the earth and her rotation give man a certain natural measure of time. As she turns upon herself, the sunlight and the shade mark out for him a division he calls a day; and for any one place the darkness severs one day from the next, but for the earth as a whole the day sweeps endlessly round. There is no line to determine where this unending light shall cease to be the old day and become the new: the symmetry of the globe renders such a thing impossible. Man must place it for himself.

Now, so long as civilized nations — or at least all such as knew or cared about one another — lived close together, it mattered little whether they all agreed upon the same origin or not; and it mattered less where they placed it, provided only it was far enough away from all. But when they came to care about the antipodes, the case changed. Whether they had each made for themselves their own day, or had consented to worship at the common shrine of a convention, the problem would have been equally embarrassing. Indeed, had the world reached that stage of scientific and practical development in which the

knowledge of its surface in its entirety became necessary, before man's migrations had carried him to what we now call Europe, no little annoyance might have resulted from his position; for, with himself as centre, the beginning of his day would lie at the one hundred and eightieth meridian, because as far away from him on the one side as on the other. If, then, his own meridian had lain not in Europe but in India, the other would have crossed the American Continent, to the great confusion of its present inhabitants. There would then have been no natural gap. An imaginary line only would make it Wednesday here and Thursday to him who stood a stone's-throw away. Most fortunately, then, the impossible hiatus occurred where no continuity was needed. The attempt to make both ends meet — the end and the beginning — was rendered unnecessary by the great Pacific Ocean. Most fortunate was it, indeed, that opposite the spot where man was destined most to think there should have been placed so little to think about.

There is one loss which most travellers count a gain. It is the parting with that day which we drop from out the circle of our year into the depths of the Pacific Ocean. We fall asleep one night in the new world to awake on the after-morrow's morning in the old. The day that knows no to-morrow — was yesterday.

And we are somehow glad. We vouchsafe the event a feeling, in our joy that we seem by so much nearer to our journey's end. We hardly give it a sober thought. Still less do we imagine that we shall meet its spirit in the land whither we are bound, — that we shall find that for once the fancies of far-Eastern superstition and the prosaic dictum of Western science are at one.

Long before such a thing as a prime meridian had entered the thoughts of men, before they could dream that their early

beliefs would later receive a certain sanction from science, the races of the Asiatic Continent had mused about the day's beginning, and put its birthplace where we have agreed to find it to-day. Their myths, and the names those myths have left behind them, are a pretty, poetic forecast of our stern matter-of-fact convention. Modern science needed a starting-point for the day; ancient fancy sought the place from which every morning came forth the sun: and the spot they fixed upon is the same. Our present fiction was an old-time fact. The sun rose from out the ocean; to the far-Oriental it seemed that he must have slept there. To them his abode was a fairy palace; to us it is a geometrical line. Thus sadly has scientific necessity caused illusion to narrow and disappear.

The continent upon which these early races found themselves did not girdle the globe. If it had they might perhaps have been endlessly pursuing and destroying one another round the circle. As it was, its general profile shaped their course to the sea. Their birthplace had much to do with the direction which they took; but apparently the direction in itself, as that toward the rising or the setting sun, had little or nothing to do with it. Such thoughts came later. They went because they were driven, probably not by foes behind them, but by the restless spirit within. While the Aryans went westward, certain of the Turanian peoples struck east; and from that moment they separated, not by distance only, but in thought, in customs, in those ways of looking at things which we are too apt to call innate, once and forever. They had differed a little when they set out. There was a whole world of feelings between the two ere they had both completed their long journey. As with the west, so in the east. Horde after horde went forth, — at first, no doubt, to seek new pasture-lands. Like many a wanderer since, they forgot the object that had brought them, in the charms of their new surroundings.

Arrived at the sea-coast, their material advance was stopped; for they possessed neither the means nor the knowledge to venture upon the boundless bosom of the ocean. The land is man's friend; the ocean is at best but neutral. The mind must abet the wish, be it ever so strong, before man will become a sailor to lands beyond the sea. But if they went not in body, their dreams sped away to an earthly paradise beyond the water, — a happy material immortality where all was young and fair. The names they have left behind them bear witness to fond beliefs; and so do the names of their lands to the journey that brought them thither.

The Japanese were among the first, and they went the farthest. They came, in all likelihood, through what is now the Korean Peninsula. Urged by the same desire that pushed our forefathers across the Asiatic Continent into Europe, they themselves at last ventured upon the sea. We can imagine them risking their way across the strait that separates what have since become their islands from the Korean Peninsula: first to Tsushima, which, from the highlands of the hilly coast, they could see, — a streak of darker blue against the sky; thence they made out Iki; and once there the islands would be a wall in front of them. But beyond these islands there was nothing but the restless, everlasting blue. To their watchful, anxious gaze, as they stood peering across the deep, no land was visible in the waste of waters. But every morning the sun rose in fiery splendor from out the ocean. Surely it was here that the day began. There could be nought beyond save the regions of the blessed, whence the day was born anew each morning for the dwellers upon this earth; and so they named their land "The Day's Beginning,"[1] long, long ago in the morning of the ages.

[1] Nihon, from whose characters, as pronounced by the Portuguese, comes our word Japan, is the collective name of the islands that compose the Japanese Empire. It

But these beliefs were not confined to the Japanese. Both before they sailed, and long after the wanderers who never returned, and even the memory of their wanderings, had been utterly forgotten by those who remained behind, such beliefs existed. From before the time of history, the races along the Asiatic eastern watershed have turned their gaze, and imaginations that pierced beyond their gaze, toward the rising, as we do toward the setting, sun. All those longings, all those castles in the air, dreams of possibilities, — impossibilities, — which come unbidden to him who watches the sun as it sinks to rest, these peoples saw when it rose from out the deep. And so it happens that the peninsula which had been the pathway of the Japanese, and was destined later to become a dwelling-place permanent beyond its fellows, comes to our notice first as a mythical region of ultramundane bliss. It was called "The Land of the God-men." In it grew, not the apple of the Hesperides, but the imaginary cactus that cured all ills, — that conquered disease, that brought immortality. "The fairy palm" the Chinese called it; and the common people in Korea see it in the mountain ginseng to-day.

But a new horde from the north poured forth, and the gods took wings before them. Less adventurous than their predecessors, they crossed not the sea; they tarried in the land and became a part of it. Yet they forgot not their old traditions; and as year after year and century after century slipped away, we may imagine that they may almost

is commonly, but somewhat loosely, translated "the rising sun." "Ni" meant originally "the sun," and thence, by an easy transition, its signification was extended to mean "the day." "Hon" means "origin." The two together, therefore, mean "the origin of the sun or day." "Nihon," which is Sinico-Japanese, would, in pure Japanese, be expressed by "hi no moto," and not "hi no de," which is the expression for "sunrise." The character signifying "to appear, to rise, as of the sun," is quite distinct from that which is read "hon," which denotes "an origin, a beginning, a birth, as opposed merely to an appearance." A strictly literal rendering bears out the mythological origin of the name, — to my thinking, even more poetic than "The Land of the Sunrise."

have looked upon themselves as the successors of the former myths. At any rate, the sun rose for them in the peaceful splendor that wraps the morning hours there even to this day, and the sunbeams fell into the valleys between the hills and nestled on the land. "Morning Calm" they called it; and it seemed not so much a name as its very essence. The drowsy quiet of the spot lulled them to rest, and they fell asleep. They were in the world, yet it was to them as if it had passed away. And so they slept on for ages.

Like the palace in the fairy tale, everything remained as it had been centuries before. Change knew them not, and time stood still. Individuals passed away and were forgotten, but the race seemed immortal. No alien might approach the place; and their neighbors to the north and west seemed quite disposed to respect their seclusion, exacting only a tribute for the privilege they enjoyed of being left alone. What they took into their sacred precincts that they kept. Albeit most of what they took had been borrowed from their neighbors' customs, they clung to it as if it had been the fruit of their own ideas. And so it came to pass that we have here a most remarkable phenomenon, a living fossilification — the preservation intact in this world, the law of whose very existence is change — of the life, the thought, the manners, the dress, of centuries ago. In the Koreans of to-day we are not only looking upon what is strange, we are looking upon what has once been and has elsewhere passed away. Like the old Etruscan king, as he was seen for a moment when his tomb was exposed to view, they stand before us to-day just as they appeared on the day of their inhumation. Like him, too, will not the vision all crumble away to dust on contact with the air of the outer world?

But Nature, as well as man, has singled out the peninsula for a charmed region of the past. When the long equinoctial summer drew to its close, and the icy hand of winter crept over

the north of Asia and entombed the mammoths where we find their skeletons at the present time, a mantle fell over what is now Korea and the countries round about. It may have been that the surrounding water for a time kept the fauna warm, or they may have been so hemmed in that Nature at bay fought for her life; but whatever the cause, the fauna lived on. Whatever change there was, they acclimated themselves to it. The tiger kept his haunts in the jungle, and the great bustards continued to roam the plains. Even the crocodile clave to the muddy banks of the estuaries which for centuries had been his, in spite of any falling off in the temperature of his habitat.

Escape may have been cut off. At all events, it was easier for the fauna to remain, even under what at first were adverse circumstances, than to migrate. It is not a little singular that this should have been the case It is certainly surprising that the Bengal tiger, so called, — a beast that we habitually associate with the damp, hot jungle, — should be found in the dry and cold climate of Korea and Manchuria. Yet there he is; and his appearance is just what it is in the jungle of India, only that he is a trifle smaller. And yet he frequents, from preference, not the warmer valleys, but the forests on the sides of the mountains. To suit his condition, his hair has lengthened and his fur is all the handsomer. His pluck in remaining has met with its due reward. He is most highly honored, much more so than he would have been in the land where he more properly belongs. His name, it is true, is a household word on the lips of both peoples; but in the north it commands not only dread but admiration. He is regarded as the archetype of strength and courage. His picture is the symbol of military greatness; and on the old battle-flags it used to be borne before the army when the Korean soldiers marched to war.

The tiger did not remain alone; his former associates

stayed likewise. The leopard continued to live where his race had lived before him. Even now, after centuries of persecution, he abounds there in such numbers that the skins form the most common of the insignia of official rank. Those from neighboring Manchuria — because to Manchuria, unlike Korea, there is access from the outer world — are to be met with, outranking the native product in lands whose specialty such things are supposed to be.

With the flora the case was different. Those species that covered the land in its early balmy days the peninsula knows no more. Their sun went south; they could not follow, and they could not live without him. They died.

Perhaps no better criterion of the rank of an organism can be chosen than its strength to endure adversity, — physically speaking, its power of adaptability. To flourish when all is fair around it, when it meets with nothing but smiles, is of the lowest; but to stand when everything compasses its destruction, "hic labor, hoc opus est." We praise it as it shows itself in the characters of men; and we do well. But it is deeper than this. It is one of the fundamental laws of Nature. All alike, the lower with the higher, will thrive when given what they want; but to mould what is given into what is wanted, this is an attribute only of the latter. "Quand on ne peut avoir ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a," might truly be called the password to race immortality. Just in proportion as the range of the capabilities of any organism becomes extended, as the compass of its powers increases, so will it resist. Increase takes place first in the complexity of bodily structure, and then, as we ascend the scale, in that of mind; and complexity in mind makes possible simplicity in matter: and this, it seems to me, renders it possible for us dimly to conceive how an infinite mind may, for its own existence, be independent of matter.

The plants, then, could not adapt themselves. All remains of vegetable life, such as grow within the tropics, have long ago disappeared from Korea. It is now, for all its past, like any of its sister latitudes for vegetation. And man has aided in the change: he has done his best to leave no aboriginal vegetation at all; and in the southern half he has very fairly succeeded. He has completely domesticated the land. Indeed, it is not a little surprising to observe how completely what we must suppose to have been originally a shepherd people has transformed its business in life. Agricultural, sedentary, fixed, — such have become pre-eminently the characteristics of the race. What was once a tribe of nomads has entirely and peculiarly forgotten its wandering instincts. They journeyed centuries ago to the land of myths, and became a part of it, — they settled in the heritage of the gods, and were content; and a halo as of immortality has rested upon them to this day.

CHAPTER II.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE PENINSULA.

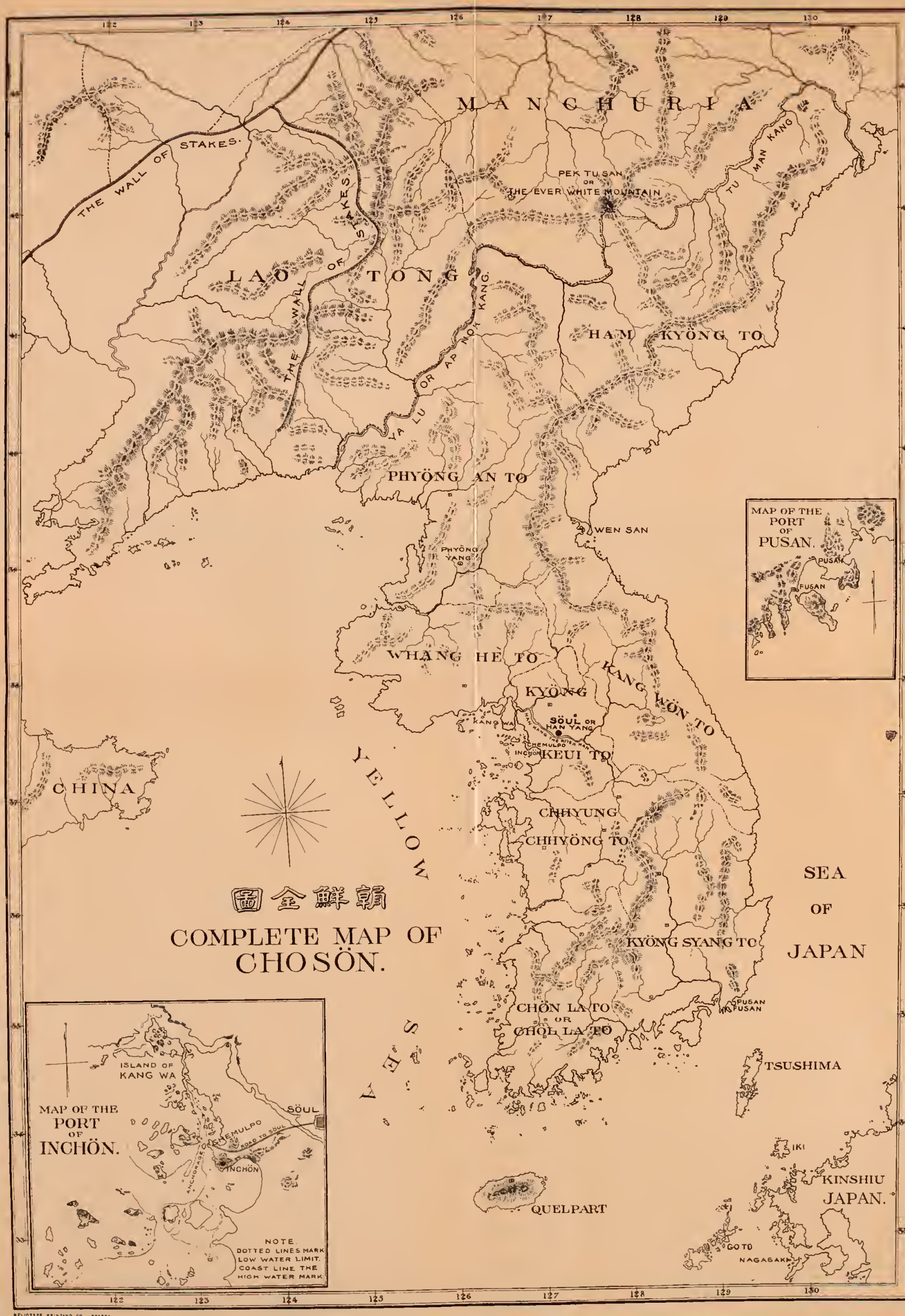
TO most minds there lurks a certain charm in the mysterious. The very fact that secrecy wraps a subject as with a mantle renders us all the more eager to tear away the veil. The possession of this feeling is at once an exciting cause and a sanction to knowledge. We realize its power as regards persons, things, events; less commonly is it a motive force to the study of a whole nation, and yet it is in this connection that I would call upon it now. I ask you to go with me to a land whose life for ages has been a mystery, — a land which from time unknown has kept aloof, apart, so that the very possibility of such seclusion is itself a mystery, and which only yesterday opened her gates. For cycles on cycles she has been in the world, but not of it. Her people have been born, have lived, have died, oblivious to all that was passing around them. They might have been denizens of another planet for aught they knew of the history of this. And the years glided into centuries, and the centuries grew to be numbered by tens, and still the veil remained as tightly drawn as at the beginning. It was but last year that Korea stepped as a *débutante* into the society of the world.

There is a certain natural fitness in beginning the description of a country by positing its geography. It is kindred to the way we commonly make one another's acquaintance. We learn to

recognize the form before we become familiar with the spirit; and though the land is not the people, as the body is not the person, yet both land and body have much to do with the character of those who tenant them.

If we will cast our eyes upon a large map of the world, or still better upon some large globe, we shall discover a peninsula just to the west of the Japanese islands. It is the peninsula of Korea. We shall know it, by inference, from the scarcity of names upon it. Of a land of which next to nothing was known, next to nothing could be represented; and we shall hardly be glad to learn that almost all of what we shall read will be incorrect. Map compilers are artful. They put in much more information than they possess; and then, when even that does not suffice to cover the paper, they reduce the scale of the drawing. By this artifice the areas unavoidably left blank are much diminished in extent. Unfortunately, then, all that we shall be able to make out from our atlas will be the existence of the peninsula, and the name Korea. We shall not discover that as much more country to the north of it is Korea, too; for the frontier line on the map will not be such as would satisfy either China, on the one hand, or Korea on the other, or Russia, that all-devourer of other people's property in this part of the world, on both.

It is hardly surprising that our maps of Korea should be inaccurate. Where no one was allowed to land under pain of losing, not his theodolite alone, but his head, — an even more important instrument in the matter, — topographers were few. Over a century ago the Jesuits in China, indeed, — who did and taught everything from religion to civil engineering, and whose career was more remarkable than the wildest imagination would have dared to paint it, — did make an attempt to survey Korea, but with scanty success. China was willing enough, but Korea was not.



朝鮮全圖

COMPLETE MAP OF CHOSÖN.

HELIOTYPE PRINTING CO., BOSTON

Ham Kyŏng To, or All Mirror Province. Whang Hĕ To, or Yellow Sea Province. Kyŏng Keui To, or Capitol Boundaries Province Kyŏng Syang To, or Happiness, Honor Province.

Phyŏng An To, or Tranquil Province. Kang Wŏn To, or River Origin Province. Chyung Chyŏng To, or Faithful, Pure Province. Chŏl La To, or Complete Network Province.

To (literally road), means Province.

MAP OF KOREA.

The career of these French Jesuits in China was little short of supernatural, and it is a matter fraught with no small interest and wonder that their teachings in religion were not more successful than they were. If ever apostles came attended with miracles efficacious to the converting of the unbeliever, they did. They reformed the calendar; they taught mathematics; they designed bridges: in truth, it would be easier to enumerate what they did not do. They gained the imperial ear; their word on all practical subjects became law to a people as numerous as the whole of Europe was then. They became the wise men of the land, and yet they converted relatively few. It looks as if they were much more scrupulous abroad than at home about the dogmas of their divine mission. With all respect to so subtile a body, it would seem that here was a chance for the clothing of themselves with a little assumption of supernatural authority much more productive and none the less credible than infallibility at home, and such a chance as may never occur again. But peace to their ashes! They did much good, and even to the most zealous of their opponents it must seem that they accomplished but little harm. And with all the folly and evil of their mistaken lives, they have exhibited examples of courage, of self-renunciation, of greatness, which cause us, as we read of their martyrdoms in that distant land of Korea, far away from all they held dear, to feel an answering throb in our own hearts. It is so easy to see the wrong in our fellow-man, and so hard to do honor to the truly good qualities of those we oppose. It is indeed a beautiful thing to have said of one what Coquelin (Aîné) said of Jacques Normand: "Il a trop de cœur pour que son esprit soit jamais méchant et trop d'esprit pour que le sentiment soit jamais exagéré."

Their topographical attempts on Korea resulted principally in failure. The best map of the country is one compiled by the Japanese Government; and it is from this that the one

given has been reduced. It is, however, a map made from external, — that is, coastwise, — not internal surveying. The Japanese have not been allowed to penetrate the land freely; and it is from charts and miscellaneous information about the interior, digested and compiled, that they have constructed this really admirable map. In 1876 they made the first treaty by which Korea had ever deigned to acknowledge the existence of the outer world; and then they proceeded with their men-of-war to make some excellent charts. Their map, as a whole, is neither so accurate nor so complete as it might be, for the reasons mentioned above; but in the main it is correct. It does not call the capital by the name of the province, as a most famous European atlas does; nor do the rivers that are drawn on the paper run across existent mountain-chains in Nature.

But, praiseworthy as it is, the Japanese map is to be seen, not heard. This somewhat enigmatical sentence is literally exact. The facts are these: On the Japanese map the names of the places are printed in Chinese characters, which the Koreans themselves use in the same way. Now, this would be as perfectly intelligible to the ear as to the eye, if all those who used the Chinese characters pronounced them alike. But they do not. Each of the three nations — China, Korea, and Japan — pronounces them after its own fashion. The result is, that, though using what are meant for the same words, neither nation understands the others. A Japanese reading from his really fairly accurate map would quite fail to make any Korean comprehend what he sought. They could write to one another, but they could not talk. Something of the same kind, though not nearly to the same extent, is to be met with in those words of French origin which the English language has embodied. No Frenchman to-day would understand them from an Anglo-Saxon tongue.

This renders the identification of Korean places coming through the medium of the Japanese, whether by spoken information or when read off their map, impossible even to a trained scholar unless he happen to be as well versed in Korean as in Japanese, — an exceedingly rare accomplishment at present.

To remedy this difficulty, Mr. Satow, late Second and Japanese Secretary of the British Legation in Tokio, has compiled and recently published a Korean map, giving the names of the places in English spelling. But as such detailed knowledge, at our present stage of acquaintance with the land, would be neither useful nor specially interesting to the world at large, I have not thought it advisable to ask for permission to copy it. As time goes on, it will become more and more valuable. At present, it is more particularly for the use of students of Korea. But our map, — for the one published by the Japanese is the product of methods similar to our own, — though more accurate, is hardly so interesting as is their land, seen through their own spectacles.

There was brought to me one day, as a curiosity, in consequence of my having expressed a wish for old books, what turned out to be an exceedingly interesting volume. It was an atlas compiled by a Korean, some fifty years ago, from a still older Chinese one. Such was the date assigned it by the Koreans themselves, and the internal evidence bears out the assertion. It is due unmistakably to the influence of the Jesuits upon Chinese notions of geography, but has wandered as unmistakably from what they could possibly have taught. In plan it is similar to our own atlases. It begins with a chart of the heavens; then follows a map of the whole world; then one of Korea; then the environs of the capital; then the capital itself on a larger scale; and it finally winds up with a sort of family tree of the emperors of China, the kings of Korea,

and the Chinese philosophers. It looks like the result of a compact between Western teachings, Chinese philosophy, and the eternal pre-eminence of the Middle Kingdom. Perhaps the most generally interesting map is the one of the world, a fac-simile of which is here given.[1] It reminds us strikingly of our maps of "the world as known to the ancients." It, too, is drawn in a sort of perspective, on the principle that whatever is distant must be small, because to the mind of the artist insignificant; only that here China, instead of Ancient Rome, is the point of view from which he surveys the outer barbarians.

We are not left to guess at the countries represented. Their identification comes from a transliteration of the characters, even in the case of those for England and France. Thus the names make certain what the contours suggest. Throughout the whole we see the hand of the Jesuits, whose teachings were accepted, but were reduced in scale, so that the dignity of the Middle Kingdom might in no wise suffer from the additional knowledge. These instructors considered it unnecessary to introduce America into the map. They only vouchsafe her the following questionable footnote: —

"Below this South Pole there is a barren land by the name of South America, which, together with the continents we have here given, make up the five continents of the world. Once a French ship at the Great Billow Mountain (this means the Cape of Good Hope, as explained by the map) saw a land in the distance. On reaching it, she found it (America, as it was afterwards called) to be one vast level wilderness. When the night came, the stars seemed to the ship's crew to be much more numerous than they remembered them at home; and when the day dawned again, they could discover no human being living there. The only sounds of life which they heard in this great wilderness were the cries of some parrots in the distance."

[1] This map appears in the octavo edition of this work.

For a piece of unintentional satire, this is exquisite; and the idea of reaching South America by taking a short cut over the South Pole is worthy of the bold disregard of natural impediments that suggests our North Polar expeditions. I forbear to draw any conclusions from the wilderness and the parrots.

To show how fairly accurate at this time was their geographical knowledge, when not stretched by a desire to seem greater than their neighbors, I may mention in passing the map of Korea. Though the details are not what they should be, the general features are in the main correct. The boundary-lines of the provinces of the kingdom are curiously enough prolonged, out into the water, as far as this is represented. The device was perhaps suggested by the fact that in some instances numerous islands, too small to be shown on the map, rendered it necessary; and a desire for uniformity prompted the rest. The wavy lines that picture the sea have at least the merit of suggestiveness.

Let us now take up again the reproduction of the Japanese map. As Korea has little or no past that is the common property of the world, and is only just beginning to have such a present, to translate the characters that appear in the original would be even worse than to omit them altogether. They have therefore been left out.

Of special importance are two sets of geographical details; and the interest attaching to them springs from two diametrically opposite reasons. The one is connected with the land's long night of seclusion; the other, with her opening to the rest of the world.

One still occasionally meets with the expression "the island of Korea." The phrase is a bit of early hearsay now crystallized into an article of geographical faith, much in the same manner as formerly, though without even so much excuse, there

were said to be two emperors in Japan, — the one a spiritual, the other a temporal, head to the nation. No such separation between matters of this world and of the next ever existed in Japan; and similarly, whatever geology may eventually inform us on the subject, man from his own experience never knew Korea as an island. He has often wished that he had. The Koreans themselves would have been only too happy to make of this fiction a fact. Unfortunately for their desire for privacy, it was not only not an island, but they were not able even practically to render it such. Though separated from the rest of mankind on three sides by the sea, on the fourth they offered a long line of assailable territory. This they were never able to defend. Luckily for them, their neighbors had not the craving for possession, the greed for land, — that ogre-like propensity of nations to grow by swallowing all that lies adjacent to them. So when these last had pushed the Koreans back to a certain natural barrier, there they suffered the line to rest. This boundary is one which Nature first, and fable afterwards, has in some sort marked out for remembrance.

At the northwestern corner of the map lies a high peak, known from the snow which rests upon its summit as the Ever-White Mountain. It is famous as the birthplace of Korean folk-lore, and a great deal that is mythical hangs about it still. It is said to be thirty miles high. This sounds like even a stretch upon a certain Japanese method of measuring the height of mountains, where, for the height proper, is substituted the length of the ascent, and a mountain is called as many miles high as the path up it is long. But here there is no well-worn path, and it would seem as if the deviations from the straight road had all been counted too. To its inaccessibility is due, probably, the supposed existence of a little lake near the top, which is said to give birth at once to two

streams. From the snows as they melt, these two streams, on opposite sides of the mountain, fall down through the half-light of the forest to the sunshine of the valley below. One of them forms a river, called in Korean "The River of the Duck's Green," which then flows southerly and separates Korea from China. The other is the Tu Man Kang, which flows northeasterly and divides Korea from the last acquisitions of Russia in the far-east. Thus the Ever-White Mountain, together with what flows from it, marks the only land-boundary of the kingdom. The Sea of Japan on the east, and the Yellow Sea on the south and west, form the other barriers that have helped so long to keep Korea to herself.

Having seen how Korea is cut off from the continent, the next set of positions to be noticed are of precisely an opposite nature, — namely, those points at which she has at last suffered herself to be approached, — the treaty ports. In modern far-Eastern geography the treaty ports play a very important rôle. They are far more than merely ports of the country on whose sea-coast they lie. With one or two exceptions, principally the capitals of the lands, they constitute the only places where Europeans may live. They thus become practically foreign colonies; for the foreign community lives under its own laws, quite independent of those of the country in which it is. To foreigners, therefore, they are in some sort the far-East itself, — that part of it alone which they may call home, but which, with the patriotism of their several races, they never do so call, no matter how many years their sojourn in them may have lasted. The result is that in Japan, for instance, Yokohama is to most foreigners a more important name than Tokio, though the former has at most but sixty thousand inhabitants, of whom about a twentieth are Europeans, while the latter has twelve hundred thousand, and is, beside, the capital of the empire.

In Korea the treaty ports are three in number, — Wensan on the north, Pusan on the southeast, and Inchön situate halfway up the west coast. By the revised Japanese treaty of 1880, and by the subsequent treaties with America, England, and Germany, these three places have been opened to foreign trade. Of these, Wensan has a productive country behind it, productive so far principally of skins and hides; Pusan, a history and a Japanese colony; and Inchön, its proximity to the capital to recommend it. They are also very favorably situated for an equal distribution of sea-coast in draining the commerce of the interior. These advantages will become more apparent as soon as there is any commerce to drain. There is another matter that hampers their general usefulness, — the climate. It is only during the summer months that they are all available. Such is the rigor of the climate, that the harbor of Wensan, the most northern, is frozen over from November to April, and that of Inchön more or less blocked during the same period. Without constant navigation, therefore, to keep the channel clear, they become for a great part of the year unapproachable. Inchön, indeed, would hardly become so were it not that it is situated near the mouth of the river Han, whose current brings down, whenever the weather moderates, large masses of floating ice, — an almost more serious obstacle to vessels than a solid sheet would be. Pusan is open the year round; but it is so far from the capital — at present the objective point — that for purposes of reaching Korea it may be said not to exist. By the present means of conveyance, it is ten days distant from the capital, Söul.

And this brings us to what is peculiarly the most important place in Korea, — Söul. Central in interest, it is also central in position. Of the many capitals which the peninsula has had, it is the last. It is also the southernmost. Taken east and west, or north and south, it is almost in the middle of the

land. Its position may be approximately learned from some of our own atlases, where it figures under the name of Kinkitao. This is not its name, however, but a misspelling of the name of the province in which it lies; just as the harbor of Pusan was set down in the early charts as the harbor of Chosan, because, in reply to questions of men-of-war's men as to what it was called, the natives answered, "Chosön," — the name of the country, — supposing the question to refer to the greater, not the less. It is suggestive to note how precisely opposite the answer would have been in Europe or America, where, to the peasant, the national is lost in the local.

On the Japanese map, Söul figures as a rectangle of some size. This representation is due to its intrinsic importance; but it is amply justified topographically, from the extent of ground the place covers.

CHAPTER III.

THE CLIMATE.

NEXT to the physical features of any land, the most important question we can ask in regard to it is of its climate.

In the minds of a great many people there still lingers a trace of the old Roman classification of the world into citizens and barbarians. It lingers, I mean, in a certain geographical sense. There is a prevailing impression, indefinite but widespread, that countries not the birthright of men of European blood must be tropical in their climate. So a friend of mine once cleverly put it, as we sat crouching over a fire on an afternoon toward the end of May in the capital of Japan. If exceptions are recognized in the belief, it is only in favor of those places visited by North Polar expeditions.

Now, to any one who has happened to inhabit one of the lands included in this generalization, — almost as pleasingly loose in its application as is the word Turanian, — the notion has seemed an amusing delusion at certain seasons and a bitter satire at others. To read epistles from well-meaning friends, congratulating you upon the delicious heat you are enjoying, — the very thought of which, they write, contrasts most painfully with their own cold surroundings, — to read these held in hands which threaten momentarily to freeze is not jocose. Your first feeling is one of wicked joy that your friend is as badly treated

as you are; your second a still more fiendish one, to answer him in the vein he expects, and so keep him enviously wretched.

The belief is not without some show of excuse. The foreign lands first visited by Europeans were indeed tropical, and the temperate zones they later came to know were so far away from home that exact information about them found difficulty in reaching the mother country; not to mention that the road to them, whether they lay to the north or the south, to this side or the other of the equator, necessarily traversed, in either case, the subtropical belt. But whatever excuses can be made for it, the impression is none the less erroneous.

Perhaps such current expressions as "in those latitudes," "foreign latitudes," and the like, have helped to keep alive the delusion; for familiar phrases go for much toward the shaping and preserving of general opinions. Insensibly the mind comes to ascribe an intrinsic truth to its own formulæ. In this case it was not unnatural that the imagination should seek to clothe Nature herself with a certain strangeness, in order to suit a tale that was strange. The very term "latitude," which should have been earth-wide in signification, came to seem restricted to something peculiar; and the tropical belt, because heard of first, furnished the material for the clothing of the idea.

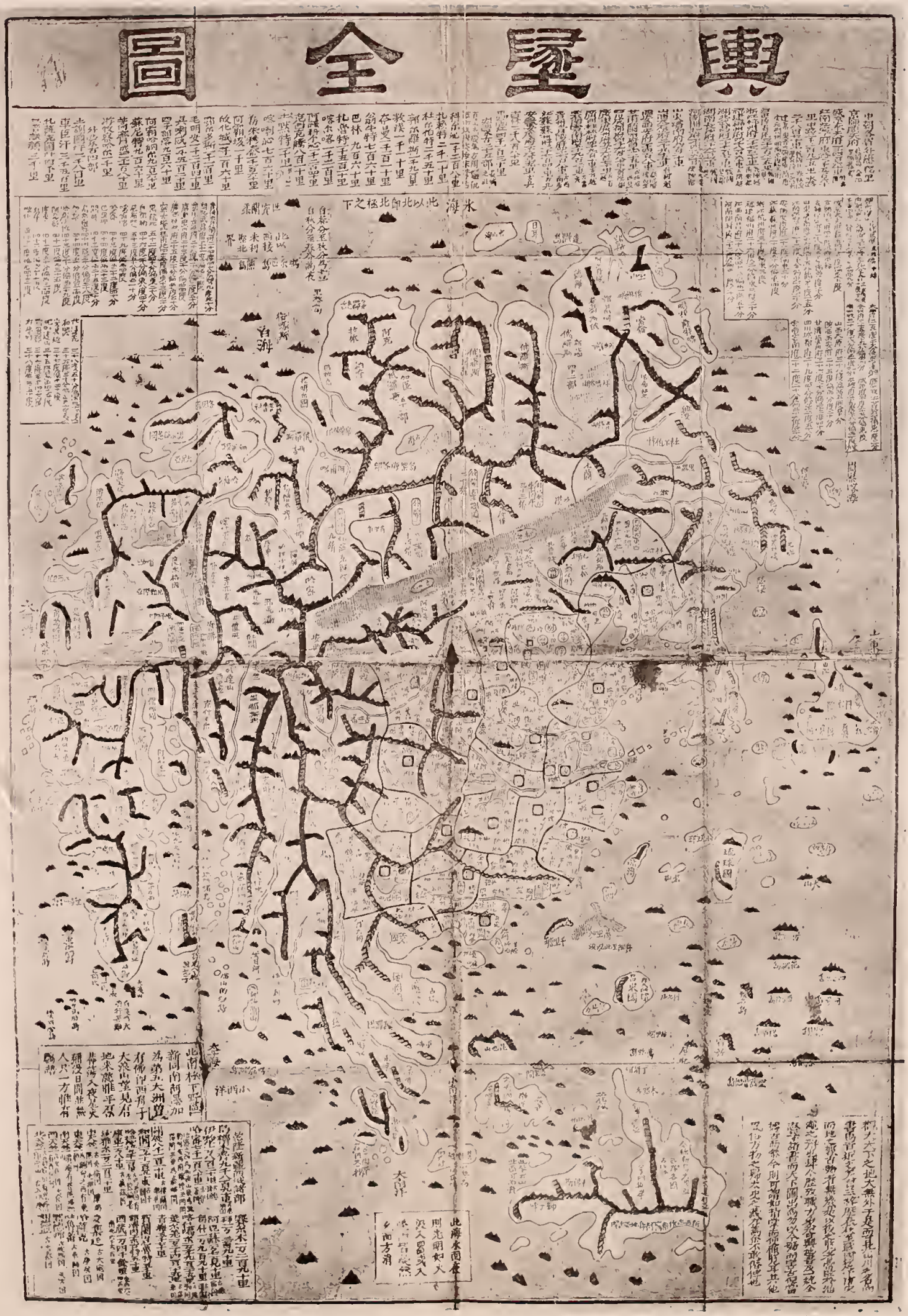
Now, these phrases were all very well in their day for the purpose for which they were originally employed. When men went abroad to seek for foreign lands rather than foreign peoples, latitudes were the best standards of comparison; for the most marked and obvious differences in Nature linked themselves at once with latitude. Then, again, it was in ships that the early explorers journeyed; and ships, as they had given rise to the idea, helped to perpetuate the expressions. A somewhat parallel case of misleading is to be found in the valuable projection of Mercator, — invaluable for that for which it was

invented, and worse than useless when introduced into the teaching of the geography of the land. Every one can remember, when a school-boy, firmly believing that Greenland was considerably bigger than South America; for so it was represented on the map.

But when, in addition to the foreign places themselves, the people living there came to be a subject of interest, the applicability of the criterion ceased. The substitution of the term "longitudes" in place of "latitudes" would have been more to the point; for almost all nations which have risen to greatness have dwelt within a narrow belt of parallels coincident roughly with the temperate zone, and more accurately still with certain limiting isothermal lines. Apparent exceptions, like that of the Aztecs in Mexico, fall really under the rule; for these people inhabited a high plateau, whose climate differed entirely from that of the sea-level at the same parallel. What is true elsewhere is equally true of what we call the semi-civilized nations of the far-East; and for the same reason, — the presence of a degree of cold sufficient to create a stimulus to work, and yet not severe enough to destroy it.

In saying, therefore, that Korea is civilized, we define its climate, and from that follows approximately its latitude. We place it, by inference, not in the tropical, but in the temperate zone; and this is where it lies. Its latitude ranges from $33\frac{1}{4}$ degrees north latitude, — that of the island of Quelpart, the farthest of the great southwestern archipelago, on the south, — to 43 degrees of north latitude, on the north, where the Tu Man Kang bars the Russian advance; and from a little beyond which the town of Vladivostock looks longingly southward to the coveted land and watches its opportunity to spring across. It might — indeed, most certainly would — have done so, had Korea slumbered much longer.

The climate of the country is what its latitude and its



KOREAN MAP OF THE WORLD. REDUCED TO ABOUT ONE-FIFTH THE AREA OF THE ORIGINAL.

(IN THE ORIGINAL THE MOUNTAINS ARE A VIVID GREEN, AND THE SEA A LILAC.)

Heliotype Ptg Co., Boston.

position with regard to the continent would lead us to expect; only that the position is here of greater importance than usual in the question. The situation of the peninsula has altered the relation of the winter and summer isotherms more than we should perhaps have predicted.

As we know, the position of a coast, whether it lie on the eastern or western limiting edge of a large body of land, is as great a factor in the matter of climate as is the absolute parallel. Not only is the mean annual isothermal line deflected from the latitude it occupies in the centre of the continent, but the relative positions of the summer and winter isotherms are altered, and the changes on the western side are very different from those on the eastern. This is even more markedly the case with the Asiatic than with the American Continent. We must compare the climate of Korea, then, not with that of Europe, — which it does not in the least resemble, — but rather with that of the eastern seaboard of America. Similar prevailing winds and similar ocean currents tend to the same climatic result. We may therefore say, generally speaking, that the climate varies from one like that of Washington, for the southern part of the peninsula, to one like that of Maine in the extreme north. Like ours, its summer is short and hot, its autumn clear and beautiful, and its winter cold but fair. But there is one season which I have omitted; and I am afraid that when I come to speak of it, it may seem to destroy the resemblance between the two. Its spring is a true spring. No feverish anxiety there to hasten on in the middle of January, as if it feared that it might be late; then a hasty relapse again into winter, finding itself long before time; and then a period of vacillation every other day, until, having frittered away all the time at its disposal, it is obliged to plunge all of a sudden bodily into summer. There is no such weakness, no months of indecision, there. The spring makes its advances slowly but surely, and the trees with their

blossoms can count upon it. They open their buds, — the earliest while the snow is still upon the ground, — and break into flower; and they never suffer for the trust they give it.

The Koreans begin their year a month later than we begin ours. Owing to this reckoning and to the steady character of the spring, there is a natural reality in their conventional birth-time of the year. The year begins for man when it begins for Nature; and the earth awakes from her winter's slumber with a blush, for it is in tree-flowers that she shows her return to feeling.

The plum-tree is the first to bloom, — not the edible plum, but that species which is known in Japan as ŭme. By the end of January it begins to blossom, — a pretty pinkish-white flower. It is quite beautiful in itself; and then from being the first, it is specially prized. It is not easy to convey to the Western mind an idea of the mingled love and admiration the far-Oriental lavishes upon it. The feeling is mostly a perversion of what was meant to flow into other channels; but though springing, to a great extent, simply from within, there is in these far-eastern lands, even to the foreign eye, much to call it forth.

Few of the better houses at this season of the year are without a plum-tree, or at least a branch of one. It blossoms in their gardens; but this is not a close enough companionship for their love. It must be where they can constantly see it; so it is taken into the house and blossoms in the room in which its owner spends most of his indoor life, — for, however many rooms may make up his house, there is one which is particularly his dwelling-place by day and by night. Poetry and painting vie with each other in their attempts fittingly to praise the flower. Sonnets innumerable are written in its honor, and have been from dim antiquity. It is the motive or the accessory in pictures without number, and its name is

one of the commonest of the flower-names of girls. The glory of the tree vanishes with its flower, for it bears no fruit.

Early in April the cherry-tree comes into bloom; and of all the superb succession of flowering trees and shrubs it is the finest. It is all flower, — one mass of blossoms, — and flower is all that it is, for its fruit is not worthy the name. Nature rarely yields both in perfection from the same tree. With us we are granted the fruit and denied the flower. We may think not. We may admire the apple blossoms, the peach, the pear; but after we have once seen the gorgeous, lavish, spendthrifty manner in which Nature scatters her tree-flowers in eastern Asia, we begin to think that at home we have been robbed.

In Korea the sight is fine, but in Japan it is even finer. It is not that the trees differ. The flora in this respect is practically the same for the two lands, but the social condition of the people is quite different. In Japan, each kind of tree, as its turn brings it round, is made the occasion of a festival. It is an epoch. In masses the people flock to see the sight; and crowds, such as are never to be met with at any other time, collect in those places that are famous for their trees. And yet even with all this tribute of adoration, the beauty is but partially done justice to. The blossoming of the cherry-tree is one of the great events of the year. To see it is a sensation. It carries you away. You feel as if the earth had decked herself for her bridal, and you had somehow been bidden to the wedding. There are several kinds of cherry-trees: some have single flowers, like ours; some double ones; but all are covered thick with the white blossoms, touched ever so faintly with pink. The trees, laden with their masses of light and color, — the two seem one for the delicacy of the tint, — stand out in dazzling contrast with the brilliant blue of the sky; and the ground beneath is white, like snow, with the fallen petals. And underneath this splendid canopy is the passing to and fro of the

pleasure-seeking multitude. What the sight is, may perhaps be judged from the fact that men of naturally slothful habits have been known to get up at frightfully matutinal hours, and then travel several miles, in order to see the trees before the morning's mist has risen from them. Some varieties are earlier than others, and particular places are noted for particular kinds. This week it will be Uyeno; the next, Oji or Mukojima or Koganei. One place of entertainment succeeds another, — a long, continuous, and yet ever-changing fête.

The cherry-blossoms past, the wistaria begins to open its grape-like bunches of flowers. In its turn it becomes the event of the day. Crowds gather in the gardens where it grows, as they did two weeks before at the cherry-trees, and pleasure-parties are made up to go to see it. After the wisteria, comes the tree peony; then the iris. It is one long chain of flowers; and this is spring. It is more of a sight in Japan, because the public is greater, and gardens and parks have been planted on purpose that it may be enjoyed. In Korea there is no public, properly speaking; the people are an unconnected mass of individuals. Collectively they amount to nothing, and singly they are too poor to procure what they would like. Everything is for the official few. In their gardens, but on a small and therefore not nearly so impressive a scale, may be seen the same beauty that commands in Japan an annually recurrent national admiration.

And spring lingers: it is in no hurry to leave a land that seems to have been created for it. The dawn of the year continues where the dawn of the day began. From the end of January till the beginning of June it is spring. And it never goes of its own accord: it is fairly driven out by the summer rains; for from early in June till the middle of July lasts what is called the rainy season. Though not a rainy season proper,

it is, as it were, a counterpart in a small way of what takes place within the tropics. During this month the sun rarely shines; it is cloudy almost continuously, and nearly every day it rains. The weather is very much like that of our summer storms, only that one storm follows without a break upon the ending of the one before. It stops raining only to gather force to rain again, and the clouds remain the while to signify the rain's intention to return. In cold and gloom the sky weeps for a month the departure of the spring, and the first hot day rarely comes upon you before the middle of July.

Then follow two months when it is hot, — as hot as it is anywhere at any time, except, indeed, in peculiarly favored localities, like the Red Sea; much hotter, for instance, than it is on the equator. And this suggests a common misapprehension about the heat within the tropics. There is a vague general impression that the heat there must be very great. This is, however, a fallacy. Of course, it is warm; but for taking the palm away from the land of its birth there is nothing so deserving as a good July day in New York. The apparent paradox is not difficult of explanation.

The word "tropics" is often used very lightly in popular parlance, as if it meant that belt on the earth's surface which surrounds the equator. Of course, it means nothing of the sort. If we would confine ourselves to the longer expression "within the tropics," it would be better; for the word "tropic" is the name, as the reader is aware, of those two imaginary lines upon the surface of our globe at which the vertical sun at noon seems to turn from travelling northward or southward, as the case may be, and moves backward again toward the equator. The sun then is just as much overhead on the tropic of Cancer, say, twenty-three and a half degrees north, at the summer solstice (this apparent standing still of the sun), as it ever is at the equator, which, be it remembered, does not take place in sum-

mer, but in spring or autumn. But — and this is the important point in the whole matter — it is much more overhead on the parallel of the tropic, so to speak; for it rises at that season — as by turning a globe the reader will see it must — to the north of east and sets to the north of west. Its path is therefore both longer, and remains more nearly vertical, for the hours on either side of the noon point than ever is the case at the equator; so that for a few days in the middle of summer, such a place as Hong Kong gets more heat than for the same length of time ever falls to the lot of Singapore. The climate naturally shows it. Hong Kong in its hot weather swelters under a temperature unknown at any season at the Straits Settlements. I have purposely chosen these two places for comparison, because they are in other respects pretty similarly situated. Both lie upon islands off a coast, and that coast, in a general way, the same.

Now, as one goes north, the sun rises farther and farther to the north of east, and sets farther and farther to the north of west, on this midsummer day. The day gains in length as it loses in momentary exposure, — that is, in the more or less nearly vertical position of the sun for each instant of time; and these varying elements are so connected as to make the amount of heat received at this time by the north pole actually greater in the proportion of five to four than that received at its most favorably placed season by the equator.[1] The reason that Arctic explorers do not suffer much from it is that it is transitory. The air and other substances do not have time to

[1] A simple integration shows this. The amount of heat received at the equinoxes by the earth's surface at the equator is represented by the formula $2 \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}\pi} \sin.\ \theta.\ d\theta$; which gives the value 2. At the pole, at the summer solstice, the amount received is expressed by $\int_0^{2\pi} \sin.\ 23\frac{1}{2}°.\ d\theta$; whose value is roughly 2.5. At their respective maxima of exposure to the sun, therefore, the pole receives more heat than the equator in the proportion of 5 to 4. The evident continuity in the value of the more general function, of which these two are particular cases, shows that the maximum for other latitudes increases steadily as we pass from the equator to the pole.

become thoroughly heated, saturated as it were, and thus aid, themselves, in the heating effect.

We see, then, that such a place as New York does not start so far behind in the race for temperature as we might at first suppose; so near, indeed, that any little accident of physical geographical position is quite enough to render it hotter, at its hottest season, than the rest of the world.

In Korea, then, during July, August, and September, it is hot, at times very hot. The effect is increased by the physical conformation of the land. The narrow valleys that lie among the hills collect all the heat they may, and then have but little opportunity to part with it. They thus succeed in reaching a temperature impossible for places devoid of such protection.

With the autumn comes beautiful weather, and the same gorgeous change of foliage as in North America. The maples die in color, and under the scarlet of their leaves may be seen the same admirers that came to worship the glory of the spring. Red seems peculiarly the tint of coming and departing. We know why it is so at the beginning and the end of the day; we have not yet learnt why it should also be the sign of the birth and death of the year.

By the end of November, in Korea, winter begins to set in; and soon the ponds and the rivers freeze, and the snow falls to bury the year that is past. The temperature descends to a fair degree of cold. During the winter I spent in Söul, it went down to nine degrees above the Fahrenheit zero, and for days together it never rose above the freezing-point night or day. The changes are not very violent; though, on the other hand, the temperature is not peculiarly steady. Slight thaws alternate with cold waves. A keen north wind, that feels as if it had come straight from the Siberian steppes, so icy it seems, drives away the lingering clouds only to reveal their frozen forms still clinging in the rigid grasp of death to the peaks, — the white wraiths of the storm.

Owing to the latitude of Söul, thirty-seven and a half degrees north, the sun's power there, even in midwinter, is so great that the snow at the sea-level never lies deep upon the ground. After a heavy snow-storm, the evening before, it is surprising to those accustomed to more northern latitudes to notice how quickly it vanishes in places exposed to the sun. If it were not for repeated additions, there would be very little even in the depth of winter; and as the season advances and the days lengthen, you may trudge homeward some night through a heavy fall of snow, to find on the next afternoon no trace of it left. You have therefore, almost simultaneously, the coming of snow, like a snow-storm in New York, with a disappearance of it worthy of Virginia; and yet it may be far colder on the day it vanishes than on the day it appeared.

To this fact it is due that we find in Korea so few of the inventions common, in one form or another, to all countries where, during a part of the year, it is cold below freezing. Sleighs do not exist. In the matter of sleds there is certainly in the neighborhood of Söul, about the middle of the country, north and south, nothing but a certain kind in vogue among the fishermen on the ice, which they use to sit on while fishing, and on which afterwards they drag home the result of the day's work. As for skates, the idea is unknown. In fact, beyond the fishermen, above mentioned, the average Korean avoids venturing upon ice in winter as he would into water in summer. The frozen state seems to be just about as awe-inspiring to him as the liquid one is commonly elsewhere.

CHAPTER IV.

THE COAST.

AN atmosphere is as a garment to a land: it enhances its beauty by partially concealing it. To this land of morning myths Nature has given a most fitting mantle. The atmosphere that envelops the coast, lends it now haze to hide, now mirage to magnify. Both the concealment and the illusion are due to the same cause, — to a certain ocean current.

Along the eastern coast of Asia flows what is called, in Japanese, the Kuro Shiwo, or Black Tide. It is an ocean current similar to the Gulf Stream of the Atlantic seaboard of America. These two, which similarity of position has similarly engendered, are among the largest of ocean rivers. They are, indeed, rivers in that they flow intact through stationary surroundings; but, unlike those on land, their history is not one of gradual accretion, but of repeated separation. It is with the first great loss of the Black Tide that we have now to do. One compact mass, the stream flows northward from the caldron of its birth, till it brings up somewhat abruptly upon the southern end of the Japanese islands. It strikes them so full that a part of it is cut off. The trend of the coast causes the greater portion to keep on northward and eastward, just skirting the land, and continuing on past the Kuriles, Kamchatka, and the Aleutian Isles, to descend the upper American shore. In times past, man has involuntarily used it as a highway. Junks blown off to sea in

storms have been carried by its force across the ocean; and many a waif has, after its long journey, been cast upon the shores of another continent.

No such distant wandering is destined for the other branch. Turned more directly north, it enters the strait which separates Japan from the peninsula of Korea, in whose midst stand the pair of islands, Tsushima, guarding the approach to the Sea of Japan. This is the end of the unlucky stream. The place is a perfect cul-de-sac. Although it has not the appearance of it on the map, practically there is no exit. Having once wandered in, the stream can only revolve round and round; for the straits between the mainland, Saghalien, Yesso, and the main island, respectively, are but shallow. Not long ago, Mr. Milne informs us, Japan was tied to the great continent; and these breaks in the chain have since been made, due to ocean forces, which have perhaps been aided by the restlessness of the imprisoned current. Itself warm, it is chilled by the reception it meets with at the hands of the northern sea. It cannot escape; it will not mingle. So it leaves the cold water for the more congenial air; and thus for a part of the year we have fog, at another time mirage. During the summer months the coast of the peninsula and the neighboring shores up along Siberia are veiled in mist. As the weather gets colder, the heavy condensed vapor is gradually absorbed by the air and disappears to the eye, while the evaporation from the surface of the water still goes on; and of the land, from having seen nothing at all, we come to see twice as much as really exists.

The character of the coast, however, is such as not to need the magic touch of the air. It is grand of itself; mirage only renders it weird. A bold and hilly country rises, range behind range, till the purple of the mountains is lost in the blue of the sky; while from the southern extremity of the peninsula, halfway up the length of its western side, this mainland is girdled

by a fringe of islands. Some are mountains, sunk to their waists in the sea; some are but isolated crags that rise abruptly from the water's edge. All are high, reaching, in places, one or two thousand feet. When doubled by mirage, the effect is comparable only to what we see represented so often in the paintings of the people, — precipices hung in air.

To one approaching Korea from the sea, the first land he will make will be the high hills around the harbor of Pusan; for most of the boats that latterly have begun to run between Korea and her neighbors touch first at that port. Whether the steamers are from Shanghai or Yokohama, they make Nagasaki, in either case, their point of departure; and then a run of from thirteen to sixteen hours takes them across the straits to Pusan, on the southeastern end of the peninsula. The first impression, as the distant streak of blue resolves itself into the semblance of real land, is forbidding enough, — crags which are uninhabitable and mountain-slopes equally tenantless. Rounding one of the latter, which proves to be an island, the steamer opens out a nearly landlocked bay, surrounded almost entirely by hills. At its entrance stand three pinnacles of rock. They look as hard and remorseless as the sea that hurls itself against their bases. Chilling as is the view seaward, to look up the bay is no less desolate. The perpendicular lines of crag have given place to the curves of the hills; but there is nought to suggest the presence of man. Even trees, which seem the nearest approach to the human in a landscape, are wanting. One's first idea of Korea is as of the spirit of desolation made visible.

Turning still, the steamer suddenly brings into view a little knoll, at whose base are grouped some score of houses. They are not so far off but that a glance shows them to be not Korean, but Japanese. It is the Japanese colony of Fusan. It is in some respects a remarkable colony. In the first place, it

is the only one that the Japanese have ever had. The spirit of trade — the great colonizing motive-power — is not a strong element in the Japanese character; the Chinese are the English of the far-East. Secondly, it is historic. For centuries it has been a bit of transplanted Japan. Ever since the invasion of the peninsula in 1592, the Japanese have held it almost without a break; it has been a little fortress by itself in an alien land. Yet, though it has lived amidst Korean manners and customs for so long, it has not been in the least affected by them: it is still Japan. Nor have the Koreans, in their turn, been leavened by it. The natives of the neighborhood, impelled a little by the desire to trade, and more by the curiosity for foreign sights, visit it by day, but they return at night to their own town. The only thing they have deigned to acquire has been some knowledge of the Japanese language; so that to-day interpreters from Korean into Japanese are either men from the neighborhood of Fusan or else returned refugees.

The Korean town of Pusan lies about two miles away, round the bay. When you learn to distinguish the thatched roofs of the houses from the brown of the withered grass, it can just be made out from the steamer's anchorage. From Fusan a road leads over the seaward slopes of the hills to it, and you are first made aware of its existence by seeing a procession of distant ghosts slowly winding their way along this path. The white dresses of the Koreans, and their slow decorous movements, lend themselves involuntarily to such spiritualistic hallucination.

From having doubted their actual humanity you will next come to doubt their sex. On going ashore you are at once surrounded by a respectful but expectant crowd. With the men gathered about the landing-place are mingled a number of young and pretty faces. They belong to persons of less stature than the men, similarly clothed but differing from them in being hatless, and in wearing their hair in one long loose braid down the

back, after the fashion of young girls at a certain age with us. Every stranger has mistaken them for girls, and not a few men-of-war's men have boasted of the impression they have produced upon the fair ones by well-directed attentions. Great has been their subsequent discomfiture, and hearty the raillery of their comrades, when told that the objects of their devotion were only boys; for this manner of wearing the hair is the common practice in boyhood, and simply denotes that the boy is still unmarried. For their want of stature and their pretty faces their youth, not their sex, is responsible; and for their being mistaken for their sisters, the entire absence of visible femininity the cause. As for real women, it is no easy matter to see any. Those of the better class are strictly secluded from their seventh year onward, and the poorer fly at one's approach like startled deer. To the foreigner the first step in the discrimination of sex in Korea is that all that is seen is male.

However well acquainted one may be with China or Japan, his first impression on landing in Korea will be that he stands on *terra incognita*. At first sight, nothing reminds him of that land, only fourteen hours away across the straits, a part of which, indeed, — the islands of Tsushima, — he may still see, by climbing a few hundred feet above the town. He feels that he is on unfamiliar soil. Nor does he feel it more than do the Japanese themselves; and a common sense of isolation begets a mutual feeling of affinity, such as years spent in the home of either people by the other would never induce. Nations, like men, show their most agreeable side when away from home.

Fusan is composed principally of one long street, turning half-way in its course at right angles to itself. The village has taken the form of a carpenter's square, with the bay, or rather two bays, to mark its outside limits, and a steep hill,

in what would be the inside angle of the square, to bar its extension inland. Down the middle of the main street runs a canal a few feet wide, spanned at intervals by planking. Along its sides are rows of trees. At the outer corner of the square is the knoll from which the town takes its name; for Fusan — in Korean, Pusan — means "kettle mountain," and the name was given the place from a fancied resemblance in this knoll to a kettle upside down. A Japanese temple now crowns the top, and the whole is covered with trees.

The Koreans that lounge about the streets of the settlement, and that may be seen coming and going over the rough hill-path, are itinerants from the Korean Pusan. The same curiosity that prompts any one who comes upon a trail of ants ceaselessly pursuing their journey along a highway of their own, to follow up the line, in order to discover the spot of exodus, tempts the stranger to wander out in search of this human ant-hill, Pusan, and see what it is like; for from the Japanese town it is invisible. The end, to a certain extent, justifies a tramp over anything but a pleasant path; for an hour's walk will show him his first Korean walled town.

After several futile ascents and descents, necessitated by projecting spurs of the hills, the path descends finally to the shore, where on the long sands native craft are being beached to discharge the catch they have just gathered from the stationary nets in the bay, and all about the sand are strewn fish of every description. The beach is the market; and a strolling crowd keep it lively and gay by incessant bargaining and an occasional purchase. While the stranger examines the fish, the crowd examine him. Just off the beach begin the houses, — the outskirts of the town. They are not above ten feet high at the ridgepoles, and seven at the eaves; and the streets are narrow alleys, in keeping with the one-story dwellings. A few hundred yards of winding lanes, enlivened

by an occasional hasty scuffle which means that some woman has been surprised into flight by the sight of a stranger, lead to the wall of the town. Seen from without, it is apparently a solid structure of stone; but on mounting to the top, which is done from within, you discover it to be made of earth enclosed by a shell of granite blocks. It is twenty feet on the outside, not more than twelve within, and is crenellated on the outer edge. Between the parapet and the inner edge is a broad walk of beaten earth. Though the height is not great, it is enough to overlook all but the more imposing buildings, such as the magistracy. On both sides are meadows of thatched roof; for the town has grown since the wall was built to protect it. Like a great snake, it can be traced lying in sinuous irregularities around the older part of the town. A gateway — as imposing a building as any in the place itself — gives the road admittance. A stone's-throw within stands the magistracy. Though a low building of one story, it rises above the neighboring roofs, and is second in height only to the gate.

A short distance from the town is another magistracy. It is a collection of buildings surrounded by its own stone wall. In this is a gate similar to the city gate; but outside of the whole, and some little way off from it, is a most singular structure. It is a sort of skeleton gateway, — the scaffolding for a gateway which the architect had thought of building and then, concluding to abandon the attempt, had been too lazy to remove what he had put up in preparation. So it might appear to any one who saw it for the first time; for it stands all alone by itself in the middle of the road, a couple of cross-bars connecting two tall posts. It is akin to the torii of Japan, and is the outer portal to the magistracy. A portal, and yet entirely disconnected with that of which, in one sense, it forms a part, it seems to typify Pusan itself; for you enter at both to find yourself nowhere, after all. At Pusan you are in Korea, and

yet you are not. Though you might thence travel overland to the capital, practically to reach it the road lies once more by sea; for to travel overland is a wearisome journey of ten days, devoid of all those means of comfort and of locomotion which to a European are a part of the necessaries of life. When the journey by sea is an impossibility, because the port on the western side of the peninsula, the one near Söul, is inaccessible for the ice, Korea becomes once more shut off from the rest of the world.

From Pusan it is a voyage of thirty-six hours, when everything is propitious, to Chemulpo, the port of Inchön on the western coast. If anything goes wrong with either the weather or the vessel, — and such, at the period of which I write, was very frequently the case, — it may take an indefinite time to reach one's destination. (We were comparatively fortunate; we were but two days and a half from port to port.) The coast is but imperfectly charted; and if it comes up to blow or the fog rolls in, navigation at once becomes dangerous, and vessels make for some natural harbor to await a better season. Besides, the greater part of the few steamers that ply there, are not what they might be; and accidents — serious, fortunately, only to time — happen at intervals.

Just as the sun was going to his setting, and the shadows of the hills behind were creeping stealthily out over the town, like giant arms extending to enfold it in the embrace of night, the steamer weighed her anchor, as if hastening to escape, and stole past the gaunt sentinels at the harbor's entrance out into the deep. As she turned the point and began to breast the wind and the sea that rolled in from the southwest, everything changed of a sudden to an ashen gray; and a chill, to the thought as to the senses, took the place of the peaceful quiet of the bay. The sea had lost its color; and the spray, as it dashed up from off the vessel's bows, seemed to heighten

the cold, hard look of all around. Then all deepened into night.

The next morning we were off the southern end of Korea, amongst the archipelago of islands. A solitary ship, off a still more solitary coast. The Japanese captain, dressed in European clothes, together with the pilot, a man of the same race, slowly paces the bridge, and anxiously watches the islands as they grow from out the deep, the only beacons on an almost unknown coast. Group after group rise into view, like deeper blue dots, upon the blue circle of the horizon, increase in size and distinctness, are passed, and sink again in like fashion in the distance behind.

As soon as one passes Quelpart, the largest of these islands, as also the one farthest to the south, there is a most marked change in the character of the sea. Off Japan and through the Tsushima Straits, the water is a beautiful blue; but the Yellow Sea, into which we now come, thoroughly deserves its name, yellow being a poetic idealism for the color of mud. The Whang Ho Kiang and the Yang Tse Kiang, besides numerous smaller streams, bring down vast quantities of sand and mud in suspension, the very name of the former river testifying to its peculiarly muddy character. These rivers, from the shallowness of the sea into which they empty, spread out to a vast distance and color the water. To increase the effect, the tides are enormous; and it is no doubt principally to their scourings, sweeping in and out four times a day along a wide expanse of flats, that the result is due. We can notice a kindred effect in the color of the English Channel and in that of the head reaches of the Bay of Fundy, in both of which places the tides are peculiarly high, combined with a shallow depth of water. In the midst of these flats stand innumerable islands. Any one who has seen the Mont St. Michel and its attendant setting of ooze will, by depriving it of man's

handiwork and then multiplying it indefinitely, be able to form a very good general idea of the west coast of Korea.

These islands or hills — for, amphibian-like, those nearest the mainland are either, according to the state of the tide — are forbidding when more closely approached. They are really submerged hills, which Time and its follower, Disintegration, have been at work to render bare. In the smaller ones they have succeeded in their process of denudation; and precipitous rocks, devoid of soil, rise from the water's edge like the skeletons of their former selves. So they must look to Korean fancy; for, in poetic metaphor, the people call rocks the bones and soil the flesh of the warm living earth. The larger still have the appearance of mountains, though much has been washed from them by the rain to help make up the ooze around them. A short grass covers them; but of bushes and trees there are almost none. Only along the foot of some of the slopes a clump may now and then be descried; and it invariably betokens a collection of low thatched roofs. The barrenness is to a certain extent a consequence of the soil, but to a much greater degree the result of the need for fuel. As the Government has forbidden the working of the coal-mines, the population is driven to timber, even to twigs, for the means of warmth during the rigorous cold of winter. Its ruthless hand has not spared beauty, nor been stayed by thought. Only superstition has caused it to pause, and that at the very summit of its profanation. All the more conspicuous for their loneliness, two or three trees stand out to view, here and there, upon the very top of a hill. Seen against the brighter background of the sky, they look like silhouettes of solitary vegetation. They would seem to be the last survivors of destruction as it creeps slowly upward. But it is not so. Their position, indeed, but not their inaccessibility, is their safeguard; for they are sacred. They are symbols of a cult which, for no merit

of its own, has outlived the religions that were planted long after. And so there they stand to-day in grand isolation, singled out from all that once have been, proclaiming a superstition of a far past, like sentinels in sight of one another across the dreary expanse of waters.

Two days out from Pusan found us steaming, like some lost vessel, up the long reaches that were to end at Chemulpo. "The world forgetting, by the world forgot," only a strong faith in human testimony justified the assumption that we were approaching anything. The feeling was heightened by the strange look of both people and land. About me were men clad, as imagination might paint the denizens of another planet, but not such as I had once supposed existed on this; while, on turning to the coast, I seemed to be carried back in geologic time as before I had felt changed in space. Around me lay suggestions of the earlier unformed ages of the earth. Huge porpoise-backed mounds, unsightly because deprived of Nature's covering of trees, and vast plains of mud alternated with stretches of sea. The scene had the desolateness of the early geologic ages.

Especially dreary was the spot on the December day when I first saw it. Over it was spread a leaden canopy of cloud. The weather was cold, and it had begun to snow. The flakes fell softly down and disappeared alike in the heaving water and the hardly more stable ooze; while a few gulls, like uneasy departed spirits, circled endlessly hither and thither, vainly searching for something they never found.

CHAPTER V.

CHEMULPO.

CHEMULPO is, by nature, a desolate-looking spot. Man has made it more so. It is the port for Söul. To call it the port of Söul would be to dignify it, and belittle the capital out of all proportion. It was formerly a little fishing-hamlet, a few thatched huts nestling in a hollow of a bare hill. It faced neither the sea nor yet the land, but as it were a compromise, — a small island with a corresponding collection of thatched roofs. So like their surroundings are these twin villages, that one has to look carefully for them to discover them. It would wellnigh be possible to sail by and report the land uninhabited. Especially true is this in winter when grass and thatch are the same dull brown; and there are almost no trees to break the uniform monotony.

The place is not a harbor. In this region of islands and mud-flats a harbor is an impossibility. It is a roadstead, and an uncommonly distant roadstead at that. Out beyond several islands, utterly cut off not only from any view of the town, but from the slightest suggestion of the presence of man, lie the one or two foreign vessels which may at the moment be anchored off the place. It is a voyage in itself to come ashore.

On the seaward slope of the same hill has sprung up the mushroom Japanese colony. It contains but one European-built house, which, paradoxically enough, is the Japanese

consulate. It is painted white. Its size and its color make it a landmark far out to sea, the only sign at a distance that one is not approaching primitive desolation.

The place lies at the mouth of the river Han, — if, indeed, a stream whose current loses itself gradually in the ebb and flow of the sea for eighty miles above the point where it enters the ocean, and which then, long after it should have parted with its identity, still persists in wandering aimlessly about among innumerable islands, can be said to have a mouth. The village is not far from the nearest point on the sea-coast to the capital, and it is the nearest point of the sea-coast to the sea. Usually the port of any city fulfils but one condition of proximity. Chemulpo has to try to satisfy two. Even as it is, the steamers lie more than a mile out. Owing to the character of the land, isolated hills and level valleys between, and to the great rise and fall of the tides, the coast may be said to be amphibious. At high water, islands like huge lazy porpoises dot the surface of the sea; when the tide is out, they change their element, and assume the rôle of mountains in a peaty district. The height of the rise is between twenty and thirty feet; but this is enough to lay the strand bare for miles, so that, at low water, the sea would seem to have left never to return. What were large bays have become glistening ooze, and the ocean itself can only be made out on the verge of the horizon.

The Koreans have never been a maritime people. The disposition of the race forbade intercourse with their neighbors by sea as well as by land, and the piratical craft of these same neighbors destroyed any domestic coast-trade that sprang up, and compelled the Koreans to retreat, snail-like, yet closer into their shell. Nature certainly offered little to tempt them out. Owing to the great rise of the tides, wharves are wellnigh impossibilities, even supposing the idea of such contrivances ever entered the heads of the people, which, from collateral evidence,

seems very improbable. They would therefore have been obliged either to moor at an incredible distance from shore or wait for high water to beach their boats. In the first case, it would have been necessary to wait for high tide to get out to their boats; and in the second, to wait for a like opportunity to get out in them, for the unstable ooze which is left bare much resembles a quicksand. Of the two evils they chose the latter. They thus became dependent upon the moving of the waters, which rose favorably either for landing or leaving practically but once a day. If they got off, they found great difficulty in getting back, and if they returned, they could not get off again; so that, in their case, both the will was weak and the way wanting, and they stayed at home. The result is that to-day the eastern half of the Yellow Sea is as deserted as the coast looks desolate. Only now and then one comes across a junk carrying supplies to an island village, or bound fishing. Instead of the fleets of huge square sails, as in Chinese or Japanese waters, there is but an occasional wanderer, like some belated traveller hastening to be gone. Two masts are the rule; and the latteen sails are laced horizontally, like the Chinese, to slender strips of bamboo, which, with the unavoidable vertical seams, give the effect of a patchwork of a dirty yellow. This peculiarity in the lacing is one of the most obvious differences between Japanese and Chinese junks, for in the one case the lines of the sails run vertically, in the other horizontally. However, though belonging to the same general style of boat, the two so differ in detail that they can be distinguished almost as far away as they can be seen. The Japanese are the more beautiful.

Duly respecting other causes, one may draw inferences of a nation's devotion to any pursuit by the wealth or poverty of the nomenclature on the subject. Both the Japanese and the Korean tongues testify to their original inland origin by the paucity of

nautical names. Boats are classed, with touching simplicity, as "boats" and "little boats." No discrimination is paid to the means of propulsion; and as for form, the one kind differs from the other only as an adult specimen differs from the young. The stern of these craft is high, and the bow low. At a distance the effect is to reverse the apparent motion to our eyes, accustomed to the opposite construction. There is, however, a good reason for the seeming inversion. Their build is not to enable them to battle with the seas, — few of which they are supposed to encounter, — but to give the helmsman a better view.

As for the Korean sailors, they hold in appearance a middle position between the Japanese and our own, — that is, they neither resemble a set of old women nor do they look like tars; for, of all incongruous associations, a Japanese junk and its crew are the oddest. With their heads tied up in blue and white cotton cloths, the hardy company of mariners, engaged in sipping tea and jabbering, suggest to the stranger some afternoon party of grannies accidentally blown off to sea. But there is plenty of pluck underneath the checked handkerchiefs. The Korean sailors look for all the world like their relatives on land, only a trifle dirtier.

The meaning of the name "Chemulpo" is "various articles river bank." It would be interesting to discover whence came this name. There is a Korean tradition in regard to it, which, however, smacks of an *ex post facto* flavor. A thousand years ago, so it runs, it was prophesied that the spot would eventually rise to be what it now hopes soon to become, the foreign trading-port of Korea. The prophecy included the neighboring magistracy of Inchön, whose characters mean "the river of the love of humanity." Owing to its being the magistracy, it is the place mentioned in the treaties. Like many another figure-head, it dozes in indolent seclusion, wraps itself in the name of office, and leaves the work to be done

by inconspicuous Chemulpo. It lies about five miles away over the hills in a little valley of its own, and it is almost too small and insignificant to presume to its title. It rejoices, however, in a multitude of names, — not names that really differ from one another, but something after the familiar Elizabeth, Elsie, Betsey, and Bess fashion, so to designate it for want of any more accurate simile. The Chinese character with which the name is written is uniformly the same, but the expressions of it vary. Both Koreans and Japanese borrowed from China, many centuries since, her system of ideographs, and attempted to imitate their pronunciation. So radically different, however, were the tongues of the borrowers, that they twisted out of all recognizable sound what they took. Under this metamorphosing process the town becomes either Inchön, Genchuan, or Jinsen, according as it comes from Korean, Chinese, or Japanese lips. You may hear it in all three forms within a few minutes.

Chemulpo itself bears a very strong resemblance to a mushroom Western village. It is in the earliest stages of the hobbledehoy period, when its wants far outstrip its capabilities. A few shanties hastily thrown up shelter temporarily the small Japanese colony and the handful of Europeans in the customs service. The only house worthy the name is the Japanese consulate. It stands with its outlying houses in an enclosure formed by a high palisade; and patrols are kept constantly on duty, for it is meant for defence as well as for habitation. It is but eighteen months since the Japanese legation fought its way from Söul to the sea.[1] Its dead sleep now on the neighboring hillside, and the white stones that mark their resting-places stand out to the eye from among the short brown grass.

[1] The first retreat in July, 1882, is meant. When this was written, it was little thought that there would be a second so soon.

From Chemulpo to Söul is a distance of twenty-seven miles. So it is called. It is as accurate as estimates repeatedly quoted but never verified by measurement are likely to be. Like the enchanted valley it has so long been, the city lies quite truly over the hills and far away. And yet all these ascents and descents profit one nothing; for Söul itself, though utterly secluded, withdrawn even from a distant suggestion of the sea, lies but a few feet above tide-water. The road thither — one of the main thoroughfares of the kingdom, as it has suddenly become — is only a broad bridle-path. Horses, chairs, foot-passengers, and bulls of burden share it. The great mass of the people walk; officials either ride on the ponies of the country or are carried in palanquins. The latter is the commoner means of transportation.

The ordinary Korean chair, or palanquin, is not comfortable to European legs. Luxurious as it sounds, and pompous and dignified as it looks from the outside, it is a hollow sham. It owes its name only to analogy. It is not a chair at all, but a square box on poles. It is an empty cube, two feet and a half each way. The box, however, is fitted up to cheat the occupant into the belief that he is in a walking room. Little windows look out in front and on either side, each fitted with its tiny pair of sliding screens. Into these are let still tinier panes of glass, two inches square, so that even in cold weather the traveller may not be quite cut off from the outer world, should he care to look. But such are their size and position that he must peer on purpose, or he sees nothing. Commonly one feels very much as if at sea out of sight of land. The swinging motion helps this delusion. Two men carry the box, and divide the burden between their arms and backs by means of a yoke with straps that fit over the ends of the poles to which the box is fastened. This contrivance not only brings their whole bodies into play, but affords a pleasing

security to the carried; for jostles are by no means infrequent in the narrow crowded streets, and the chair might be, and often is, knocked out of the coolies' hands. At such times, thanks to the straps, nothing worse than a sudden jerk is the consequence. On journeys two other men accompany as a relief. Each of them is armed with a long stick. It is their duty at intervals to insert this under the chair and lift it up to ease their fellows. By this means the unavoidable rests are less frequent. As no warning of the change of portage is given, the effect is as unpleasant as it is unexpected. The contrast to the ordinary motion is very much like that due to coming suddenly on paving-stones in a carriage after a smooth bit of road. When the rest does come, it is an even chance whether carriers or carried are the more tired. European legs have been used for so many generations to walk with, not to sit upon, that where they are not considered as entitled to consideration, comfort is out of the question.

The scenery between Chemulpo and Söul one might describe as wanting. It is, perhaps, as dreary as any in Korea; and this not so much from the great underlying features of the land as for a dearth of pleasing details. We may find difficulty in believing, after Clifford, that space is corrugated; but any one looking upon this portion of Korea would realize that the earth certainly can become so. A sheet of paper soaked in water and then suffered to dry spontaneously will furnish an excellent example of the profile of the land, for the surface of the earth there looks as if at some past geologic epoch it had been crumpled. Range after range of hills necessitates continual ascents, to be rewarded only by immediate descents on the other side. Expectancy is balked by the certainty of a prospect to come exactly similar to the one which has been left behind. Now, these ranges might be very picturesque were they well wooded, but they are not; and in this bareness lies the un-



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attractiveness of the scenery, — it being a treeless region, and one deprived, principally by man, of Nature's covering. Above are hills covered with short brown grass and occasional patches of young pine; below is a vast checker-board of rice-fields. The whole landscape wears a dull sombre brown hue, relieved in winter only by the white of the ice and snow. In the summer time the rice shoots and the wild flowers give it something of beauty, but when these are wanting it is mournfully colorless. To one coming from Japan, the contrast is most striking. Where color is so essentially a part of any view that the very name for landscape embodies it, it is no wonder that the few Japanese wanderers hither miss their lovely land; for their word "keshiki" ("scenery") means, analytically, "landscape color," and where thoughts are turned more to Nature than to man in admiration, it may be translated, not inappropriately, "couleur locale."

The country, though in no sense densely populated, is, after all, not so sparsely inhabited as one at first sight imagines. The houses are deceptive in both size and color. There are several villages scattered along the line of the road, and many more a little distance from it; but it passes through no large towns. This is because it is a new road. Its surroundings have not yet had time to grow up to its own importance.

Another feature of the country is the absence of barriers. Generally speaking, there are no stone walls, fences, or other obtruding marks of personal exclusiveness. Only in immediate connection with the houses themselves are hedges or walls built, and then only to enclose a bit of land peculiarly domestic. For the rest, the eye roams at will. This absence of boundary-lines is due not to the fact that the Koreans do not divide their land individually, but rather that the land to be divided is of such a kind that prominent marks of division are not only unnecessary, but impossible; for rice is the principal

agricultural product, and most of the land under cultivation is laid out in rice-fields. As these are under water for the greater part of the year, the barriers between one man's land and his neighbors' subserve the double purpose of division lines and causeways of approach.

The roads in Korea are of the poorest. They hardly deserve so fine a title. They are simply tracks. They were not made; they grew. At least they have the appearance of having done so, and certainly no labor is ever bestowed upon them after they are once started. But this is quite in keeping with Korean customs. In the peninsula nothing is ever repaired.

Though the roads are not much of a comfort on the journey, care is taken that the traveller shall not miss the one he wants; for they are thoughtfully provided with sign-posts. A certain figurative suggestiveness is universally accorded to the sign-post. It is granted a certain personification, that it may seem the more naturally and vividly to convey its information. We are all of us familiar with the conventional hand that with stern inflexibility indicates the road we ought to take, but a sign-post with a face is peculiar to Korea. To come upon one of these mute and motionless guides suddenly on turning a corner is somewhat startling. The face, though unfortunately grotesque, is a portrait. It is the portrait of a gentleman or of a notorious malefactor; for accounts differ, and the portrait does not explain the character of the original. He lived, according to Korean indefiniteness, a thousand years ago. Some say that he was a famous general who gave his attention to opening up the country, and instituted an improved system of roads throughout the land, especially in out-of-the-way districts (for the eastern provinces were at that time trackless), and that his effigy was taken for the sign-posts, to commemorate his work, — an admirable hint for redeeming from utter worthlessness some

of our uglier public statues. Others affirm that he was a celebrated criminal, as bad as he could be; and they go so far in evidence as to narrate his particular crimes. To deter others from following in his footsteps, they add, his likeness was placed at all the cross-roads. There is, thus, some difference of opinion as to his moral character, though the general verdict seems to be that he is guilty. But everybody knows his name, which is Chang Sun. On the lower part of the post, which will pass for his body, are the characters that represent his name, and below them are painted the necessary itineraries.

CHAPTER VI.

THE JOURNEY UP TO SÖUL.

TO travel with another, while it halves the seeming length of a journey, shortens at the same time the road to that other's character. The first day on Korean ground, dependent, as perforce you must be, for attendants, if not companions, upon the men of the land, will disclose to you one of the most salient of the national characteristics. This is an insatiable appetite.

With the native means of locomotion, the journey from Chemulpo to Söul takes a full day. Bound from the sea-coast up, it is specially important to start betimes, as the city's gates are closed at nightfall, and any one reaching them too late must stay without. Disagreeable as it is anywhere to arrive after dark, here the precaution to avoid doing so becomes a necessity to any arriving at all. In view of this, therefore, and of the fact that, being December, the days were at their shortest, and the time at our disposal reduced to its minimum, it was imperative to leave early. Everything had been made ready the evening before, and there was no reason why we should not set out at a respectable hour in the morning.

So I thought as I fell off to sleep, and so I remembered to have argued as memory struggled back in the morning. This induced me to get up.

But I had reckoned without my Koreans; and, unfortunately, we were not together. The Japanese consul had kindly

made me his guest, not because he was Japanese, but rather because he was not, — at least, in what prompted the invitation, his mode of life, — for he possessed the only European house in the settlement. This was the occasion; the deeper cause lay in his great kindness and hospitality, which were charmingly combined with diplomatic astuteness and *savoir faire*.[1] The Koreans who were to accompany me to the capital had quarters in the native town. They were under the direction of a colonel in the army and a returned refugee. The latter was neither personally nor politically an outcast, but simply a man with a history, — one which, as he told it to me later, brought back to memory the stories of the "Arabian Nights." The minister himself had gone up the day before, to report to his Majesty the result of his mission. He was to send down palanquins for us, as none were to be procured at Chemulpo. The palanquins had safely arrived, but still the Koreans tarried. As they failed to come, word was sent to remind them that time does not stand still. The answer, both in letter and in spirit, strikingly resembled, as it appeared in the light of after events, the advertised "immediate despatch" of vessels about to put to sea. To judge from the reply, we were already off; and yet, somehow, we did not go. The language lends itself easily to such pleasing delusions. One hour, two hours, three hours, passed by, not without frequent requests sent to the Koreans to hurry matters. At last the cause of the delay came out: the escort were waiting to dine.

The average Korean does not eat that he may live, but lives that he may eat. This view of life is never more painfully apparent than when one is about to set out on a journey. After

[1] In the Japanese system, the diplomatic service and the consular service are not rigidly separated, as is the case with most European countries. Japan is like the United States in this, but fortunately unlike them in that her representatives abroad are men trained to the position. The system, in fact, resembles that recently adopted by France. Korea has not yet reached the point of having any system at all.

everything is in readiness, and any other people would be actually on the road, the Koreans sit down to a slight collation. The uncertainties of travel add, to their minds, a further inducement to so generally precautionary a measure. The consciousness that they are thus sure of one good meal and that they may not get another, sharpens an appetite that by nature needs no whetting. For such special cause is never in the least important to the act. The idea that eating can be looked upon as a necessary evil is foreign to their conceptions of things; as they practise it, the act is usually unnecessary and invariably considered good. To most Koreans it is always meal-time.

Finally, toward the middle of the day, they appeared, — I am afraid their repast had been unduly hurried, — and we started off amid the farewells of the kindly consulate gathered in force on the steps. Leaving with joy the holes and pitfalls which may eventually grow into streets, but which are now only dangerous gaps between the shanties that cling to the side of the hill, the caravan struck into the path. It was a motley assembly in *personnel* and equipage. The company consisted of a Chinaman, a Japanese, several Koreans, and myself. The means of conveyance were no less various. We had a horse, some palanquins, called by courtesy chairs, and two jinrikisha, — the last a species of large baby-carriage drawn by a man. The jinrikisha were a foreign importation; we had just brought them over from Japan. They were among the first to arrive in the country; and great things were expected of them by the Koreans, who had learned to like them abroad. But the roads in the peninsula are altogether too rough — even the best of them — for wheels, and the native coolies are perfectly innocent of the way to handle the vehicles. We had not gone a mile when one of the two broke down, and spilt the Colonel, who had been trying to look as if he enjoyed an uninterrupted succession of jolts. The unfortunate jinrikisha was

smashed beyond the possibility of mending on the spot, and had to be abandoned. Then the horse went a great deal faster than the chairs, though his pace was not such as to alarm the most timid, and disappeared in the distance ahead. To my own lot fell one of the palanquins, — or, to use a more descriptive word, boxes, — and what with the freezing cold and the cramped position I soon found it intolerable, and took to walking; whereupon my coolies, left to themselves, abused their liberty, and were not even to be seen, so far had they lagged behind, when I bethought me to vary discomforts by entering it again.

Amid this general wreck there was but one thing that remained praiseworthy. As might have been expected, this was the commissariat. From Japan the Koreans had brought over much beer, which, with kerosene and matches, are the products of Western civilization that first strike the native fancy. Before leaving Chemulpo they had taken the precaution to lash a couple of bottles of the beer into each chair. These gave a well-regulated, almost military look to the column when closely scanned; but then the leader of the party was a colonel in the army. This admirable commissariat unfortunately availed nothing; for in losing one's chair, one lost of necessity its contents, and to the loneliness of desertion was added the misery of being cut off from one's base of supplies.

As the reader has gathered from the description of the scenery, there was a certain monotony about it which turned one's attention all the more to his fellow-travellers along the highway. They would have arrested it in any case. From white dots in the distance, they developed, on a nearer approach, into figures clad in bluish-white tunics suggestive of dressing-gowns, black halo hats, and large goggle spectacles. There were plenty of them; and the greater number walked, only the occasional few riding on horses or being carried in

palanquins like our own. Otherwise they represented all classes of society, from the highest to the lowest. Their long flowing robes suited well the natural dignified slowness of their behavior. Whether it is the quiet temperament that fashioned the clothes, or the clothes that subdued any natural excitability in the people, is a problem resembling that of progenital priority between the egg and the hen. At any rate, the two are now in complete accord.

To suppose, however, either from the temperament or the dress, that the Koreans are not a people who travel, would be a mistake. Although far-Orientals are slow in their actions, as compared even with the European middle classes, not to speak of energetic and nervous Americans, they are, in no sense, people that stay at home. Travel in China, Korea, or Japan surpasses that in olden times in Europe; and even in these days of travelling facilities, rapid transit, and studied accommodation, the practice is probably quite as much in vogue in the far-East, if we reckon it — as of course we should, where it is the spirit of travelling we are considering — from the time spent, and not the distance traversed.

To what causes this ant-like activity is due it is not easy to determine, especially in Korea. In Japan the pilgrims furnish the largest contingent to the travelling class; but the pilgrimage itself is more of an excuse than an end. The journey is quite as much a pleasurable excursion as a religious devotion. The latter gives, as it were, a sanction to what would otherwise be looked upon, however enjoyable it might be, as an unpardonable waste of time; for it is principally the working middle classes who undertake it. In fact, most of the pilgrims belong to so poor a class that they could not afford to travel were the journey at their own expense. They enroll themselves as members of associations to which they annually contribute their mites, and these enable a certain

number to make the pilgrimage every year. A different set are sent out the next summer; and so the list is gone through, until eventually each member has had his journey.

But in Korea the travelling public is differently constituted. You cannot take it for granted that those you meet are the picturesque transmutation of the force of faith into the energy of action. On the contrary, you see here the result of purely secular causes, and not a reflection, however dimmed, of deeds which shall profit *in sæcula sæculorum*. Nor are the white-robed wanderers principally pedlers, though such exist. In addition to itinerant hucksters that thrive by perambulating, the world over, there is a large class in Korea who journey either for pleasure or for some other reason than trade upon the road. If we define a traveller *par excellence* as a man who is singular enough to journey for his good and not his goods, a large proportion of those we meet would still have a right to the name. In the first place, the Koreans are passionately fond of scenery. The possessions of each province in this respect are not only thoroughly known, but they are systematically classified and catalogued. A grove of trees is celebrated here, the precipices of a mountain there, the moonlight falling on a pool of water in a third spot, and so on. Such places people come from long distances to see. Then, again, every year it is fitting to visit the tombs of one's ancestors; and all who can afford to make the journey do so. Annually, also, the literary examination is held at the capital, and students gather from all parts of the country to attend it. Several hundreds in this way journey as many tens of hundreds of miles, and then return again, the greater part unsuccessful in the contest, to their homes, to try their luck once more another year. Lastly, among the official class there is a good deal of promiscuous travelling hither and thither, either to get a place, or to keep one's place, or to

wring money out of some one else who holds a place by threatening to defame and oust him unless he pays.

The travel differs in one respect from that among us. It is nearly all within the limits of its own country. Each of the three nations — Japan, Korea, and China — is intensely patriotic, and cordially dislikes and despises the others. Consequently, in olden times there was little desire to urge men abroad. Besides, they were, as a rule, too poor to go. To journey to foreign lands was an unusual occurrence until Western nations forced themselves upon the people, and by showing them a little of the luxury of Western ways, gave them the desire to learn more. Nevertheless, such international journeys have been undertaken; and it is almost proven that most of what we call the civilization of China was imported from the Altaic table-lands by Chinese travellers. In fact, as has been elsewhere pointed out, the more we learn of the past the greater we discover international intercourse to have been among the old-time nations of the world, in spite of the drawbacks with which it was attended. But such journeys were, after all, sporadic, and did not affect the general restriction in the countries in question.

In consequence of this spirit of travel, the roads present a lively appearance; and often in the distance a highway can better be made out by the people who are strung along it than by any other indication.

The custom also affords a foreigner an excellent opportunity for the study of physiognomy; and it is surprising to note, under such conditions, how quickly you pass from the stage in which all faces look alike to that in which you would never mistake one man for his neighbor, though both might be to you unknown.

The speed of a company is unfortunately, like the strength of a chain, dependent upon its weakest member. The halts of

the palanquin-bearers reduced ours to an average which, under the circumstances, became little short of agonizing. Were we to arrive that night or not? And if not, what? For, on inquiry, I learnt that such a thing as an inn did not exist. While there was light there was hope; and with hope, vexation of spirit. It was almost a relief when the setting of the sun took away all doubt with him. The gloom of the improbable settled into the darkness of certainty. We were not going to reach Söul that evening.

Experience may be rough in its teachings, but it impresses its lessons. I learnt more about wayside lodging in general that night than much study in some comfortable arm-chair before a good fire could possibly have yielded me. To begin with, inns, I discovered, are unknown in Korea. This may appear surprising at first; but the dearth is explained when we consider for a moment the constitution of society there. The reason lies in the absence of a middle class; for it is to its existence that we owe a patronage which has evoked not only such simple inventions as inns, but those more complex contrivances with which we make life easy to-day in our own part of the world. When that class which as individuals is powerless, but as a class is strong, wants a thing, it gets it by the economic force of numbers. Conveniences are provided for the many, which the wealth of the few fails to procure. Now, an inn (one of the simplest and therefore the earliest of such productions) is both impossible and unnecessary in a land where men are divided only into two great classes, — the upper ten thousand, on the one hand, and the lower ten millions, on the other. The officials are but a handful in number, but they are Korea; while the rest help only to swell the number of the population. The officials form an oligarchy; and when they travel they quarter themselves as a matter of course upon their *confrères*, and put up at the various magistracies which lie along their route. They thus

get the best the land can give, and the help of the magistrates' band to provide amusement, and so promote digestion. Exclusion from the privileged few engenders a feeling of common brotherhood among the masses, so that when they journey each after his kind is offered hospitality by his neighbor. The wayfarer carries with him his food, which means principally his rice, and his lodging is kindly given him by the first house at which he is minded to stop.

In keeping, as it were, with the military character of the Colonel, we were not going to adopt either of these modes exactly, but something which savored slightly of seizure. There was a house, the Koreans said, about an hour's march ahead, which they had in mind. This they intended to make their own for the night. The weary hour slowly dragged along, till at last we stopped at what we were told was the place. I crawled out of my box much numbed, and entered the enclosure. Some women were tending what stood apparently for the kitchen fire, in a side room. So I sauntered in; whereupon they incontinently fled, and this in spite of the circumspect manner in which I flattered myself I had looked at everything else while intent upon them. It is not only stars which can best be observed by looking a little off them; and the edge of the retina is more sensitive than the middle for other than purely astronomical purposes. The precaution was not appreciated. They regarded me as a sort of tiger, I was told, — flattering, but fatal.

On reaching the guest-room we found it already occupied by some interpreters of Chinese, on their way to Chemulpo. At this sad discovery the Colonel was seized with a violent fit of repentance. He at once began to reproach himself to me in no measured terms for the pass matters had reached. He said he was bad, very bad; that it was all his fault. His contrition was touching. I was much moved, though quite convinced

that, on the return of a like opportunity to dine, he would exactly repeat his dilatoriness of the morning. However, repentance, if not efficacious in the present, is to a certain extent an effacing of the past; and far-Eastern politeness finds words much cheaper than deeds. At all critical points of that disastrous evening he repeated his would-be expiatory formula. It finally took to itself the similitude of a propitiatory prayer to inexorable fate. Apparently it had as little effect on destiny as it had on me. However, as in duty bound, I protested the entire groundlessness of his only too evidently justified self-accusations.

After the inevitable slight collation which filled up the awkward gap of waiting while the coolies rested, we pushed on; for there was another house, it appeared, which the escort considered suitable for seizure some distance farther ahead. It was getting every minute colder and colder, and by this time had grown pitch-dark; for the night was cloudy.

We halted a moment to light our lanterns. In Korea all wanderers abroad at night are required by law to be furnished with lanterns, which, as they swing to and fro by the motion of the men who carry them, look like fireflies flitting about in the darkness. A tallow candle is enclosed in a white paper screen, and this is dangled from the hand by a string. Sometimes the lanterns are given names, — an honor which poetry is fond of bestowing upon almost everything in the far-East. By this distinguished attention their lustre has been much diminished; for the names are painted in large black characters, through which no light can possibly pass. My own lantern was significantly entitled "The Bright Moon;" and never was moon more needed than over that particularly rough road on a cloudy night. It took three characters to paint this name; but they tried to make up in meaning for what they obscured in light, for they represented no less than two moons

and a sun. To express the idea of brightness, the Chinese, and copying them the Koreans, have found it necessary to outdo Nature. She considers one luminary at a time sufficient for purposes of illumination, but to their minds it requires both at once to indicate true brilliancy. So bold a conception as a conjunction of the sun with the full moon did not deter them in the least.

With the darkness and the lanterns, the caravan took on an even more picturesque appearance than it had worn by day. The shouts of the men, their occasional stumbles, and the little earth-born moons flitting from place to place, as they were specially needed, looking in the distance like so many will-o'-the-wisps, made up a scene as delightfully fantastic as the march would otherwise have seemed uncomfortable; and the sights and sounds came to me in the interior of a box swaying in its motion like a ship at sea.

In spite of the rugs with which I vainly endeavored to keep warm my legs crossed in front of me, my feet ached with the cold, and I began seriously to consider how much longer the thing would be endurable, when suddenly the swinging motion ceased, and I was violently set down upon the ground. There is at times in the acts of palanquin-bearers a resolute abruptness which is simply startling; it is only equalled by their more usual automatic inflexibility of purpose, — a dogged determination that is beyond praise as it is also quite deaf to expostulation. They are somewhat like well-regulated machines which, once set going, it is impossible to stop, and, once stopped, take forever to wind up again. In this case, for once, their actions coincided in intent, if not in execution, with my desires; and I willingly emerged with some difficulty, feet foremost, and then began to tramp rapidly up and down, in the hope that circulation might be coaxed into returning.

In the mean time any lingering scruples on the part of the owner, any reluctance to receive us that he undoubtedly felt, were being calmly set aside, and we were asked to enter. Passing through a doorway in a wall of mud, we found ourselves in the courtyard. The night was so dark that the buildings which surrounded it could hardly be made out against the sky. In the midst of this cavernous enclosure several figures were bustling about, revealed in silhouette by a lurid glow that came apparently out of a hole in the ground. Into this hole the figures were busily engaged in stuffing brushwood. The subterranean crater and its attendant demons were all that was to be seen. It argued for the warmth of Korean hospitality, but it vividly suggested the jaws of some infernal region. It was called, in Korean, not inappropriately, "the mouth." It turned out to be, inoffensively enough, the opening to the khan, a sort of underground furnace, whose flues take the place of basement to a house, and are made of such materials — stone and wood — that the floor above, once heated, is kept warm during the night. The men were at that moment heating it up for us. The room on top of it was in this case exceedingly small, — a mere little cell, about eight feet square, and having for apertures only a small door and a tiny hole completely covered over with oil-paper, so that very little light at any time, and absolutely no air, could enter through it.

Supper, such as it was to be, was preparing; and in the mean time my young Japanese and I squatted on the floor of the cell, — for there are no chairs in a Korean house, — wrapped ourselves in our robes, and, longing for the earth beneath to heat, already felt a trifle warmer by anticipation, but for any material change waited for a long time in vain. At last, after repeatedly feeling carefully all parts of the flooring, we discovered a slight increase in the temperature

of one corner. From this corner, the one nearest to the fire without, the change slowly spread till every part of the oil-paper, which lined the stone beneath, had become warm to the touch. From the floor the heat was communicated to the air, and we began to throw aside our wraps, one by one; and by the time supper was over and we were ready to go to sleep, the room had become quite comfortable. Relying upon things remaining as they were while we slept, and ignorant of the character of the demon we had evoked, we dozed off; but oblivion was short-lived. It was not long before I awoke with a start to find myself in an atmosphere like the inside of a furnace. The heat was stifling. I scrambled to the door, threw it open, and tried to breathe; but the doorway was very small, and instead of leading into the open air, it gave exit into an anteroom open only on one side, so that the ventilation in consequence was almost nothing; and the heat from below, instead of abating, increased. I threw off as much of what was still left of my clothing as I dared, with the air outside many degrees below the freezing-point, and, so freed, again courted sleep, but all to no purpose. I was painfully awake. Then I tried science, and endeavored to estimate dispassionately the comparative discomforts of intense heat and extreme cold under my exceptionally favorable opportunity for experimentally contrasting the two within so short a time; but feeling overwhelmed philosophy. I could only cursorily note the much greater sensitiveness, as a thermometer, of the foreign over the native body; for was it not from Korean kindness that I was at the moment profiting? Perhaps even this generalization was hasty; for though the Koreans were sleeping quietly enough in some neighboring rooms, their comfort had not been so particularly looked to as mine. I was the victim of the too complete fulfilment of my own previous desires; for I myself had unwisely

urged them to feed bountifully the flame. Then I yielded to misery. I reflected upon the exceeding vanity of human wishes. I moralized upon the universal truth of our obtaining in this world, if we only know how to wait, all we can desire, and sometimes much more. And then I fervently desired that for once, at least, the more might mercifully become less, and I tried to imagine I detected symptoms of cooling off. For some time I failed even in deceiving myself. At last my longings were fulfilled. Owing to the men whose duty it was to stuff in the brushwood, having long since fallen asleep, and the fire for want of fresh fuel having now been extinct for some hours, the constant radiation into the air and thence through the doorway ultimately produced its effect; and, the room becoming once more habitable, I fell asleep.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JOURNEY UP TO SÖUL. — THE SECOND DAY.

TO one reflecting on the utter contrast between the feelings that enwrap us with the deepening gloom of night and those we inherit with the birth of the new day, it would almost occur to doubt a continuous personal identity. In the gloaming our sensitive side, our feelings, our passions, seem to awake to a strength, an acuteness, that had lain dormant during the light. For joy or for sorrow, the heart measures then all things by itself. But with the morn awakes the thrill of being. We feel the throb of the life within us that answers to the pulse of the life without. Action in thought has paled before the thought of action, and we forget our world of fancy in our fancy for the world.

I stepped out into the clear blue winter's morning. It is not altogether a conceit that the hour to see the Land of the Morning Calm is that from which it took its name. Of the two paintings in colors which Nature grants us every day, at the opening and the closing of it, — for all the rest is, in her chiaroscuro, blue and green, — the sunsets in the far-East are rarely fine. As for the sunrises, whenever I have by accident witnessed Aurora arise from her dewy couch, I have been so overcome with her roseate blush of surprised confusion that I felt like an impertinent intruder, who would better have waited until he was expected by the sun. But the early morning hours in

Korea are certainly very beautiful. The landscape lies, as it were, in a trance. A misty haze gives a dreamy look to the distance, and the morning seems to tarry till the middle of the day.

As for the house, — a work of man, — it had lost a good deal of its picturesqueness of the night before, seen now under the scrutinizing light of day, and stood revealed, I must confess, in much plainness and more dirt. However, as our object was to leave it as soon as might be, appearances did not signify. As for the cell, I will do it the justice to say that it compared very favorably in size with its fellows of the same rank in life, as I involuntarily discovered in the course of the next few hours.

A Japanese cook, skilled to a certain extent in the art of European cookery, did the best he could under the circumstances to give us a breakfast. He had been imported on purpose. To live continuously upon native dishes anywhere in the far-East is to almost all foreigners disagreeable, not to say injurious. To banquet after that fashion occasionally is one thing, and to adopt it as a steady form of diet a very different matter. In the former case you get, in the first place, the best of its kind; and then, if one dish does not happen to please you, and you are hungry, you eat all the more of another, so that you end, as a rule, by eating too much rather than too little. After a little familiarizing practice, a Japanese feast, even to a European palate, is delicious. But to eat thus for a livelihood, not *en amateur*, is no such enjoyable affair. Even in Japan, where the experiment is tried under more favorable conditions than in China, and far more favorable than in Korea, it is not easy. To start with, it is usually when travelling in the interior that it is attempted; and the inns, though as good of their kind in Japan as anywhere else in the world, are of course wanting in the luxury of the city restaurants. To

European culinary ideas of essentials, the situation is one grand negation. When we say that the cow is never milked and rarely killed, and that yeast is unknown, we express the facts; but one must have made the experiment to realize fully what is meant. It means no milk, no butter, no cheese, no bread, and in the country often no meat, and sometimes even, as a last deprivation, no eggs. Life resolves itself into this all-embracing question: To which of the two great classes of mankind does the traveller belong, — to those who like rice or to those who do not? If he belongs to the first class, he can just manage to get a living; if to the second, he is hopelessly lost. As a passing tribute most justly due, I may add that no food I have ever seen is so artistic and beautiful to look at as the Japanese.

Korean cooking, judged by our standards, and also by as nearly impartial criteria as possible, is better than the Japanese. The Japanese admit it themselves. It is much more substantial. Unlike the latter, the Koreans eat a great deal of meat, though in both countries rice is, after all, the staple of subsistence, and more than takes the place of wheat with us. But enough. I am becoming like unto a Korean myself, and practise on paper what I have just held up to opprobrium. I reserve what I have to say for a more appropriate occasion, for all this has been suggested by the lightest possible of breakfasts.

For the moment the important matter was not so much what we ate as how often we ate it; for every stopping-place was turned by the Koreans into an extempore buffet. When we had time, we retreated into a room, like the cell of the night before; when we had not, we took our refreshment *al fresco:* but we always ate.

The excuse for stopping was that the palanquin-bearers might rest. This they were obliged to do every mile or so,

involuntarily furnishing us with a practical exact comparison of the superior advantages of wheels; for in Japan, where the kuruma men (the men who wheel the jinrikisha) draw the same weight these others carry, and at much greater speed, — twice as fast, on the average, which means four times the exertion, — they stop to rest only every five miles. This would give us about one to twenty for the ratio of fatigue of the two means of transport. When they do halt, rice and tea are all they take, in either land.

One never regrets the land of the rising sun in the land of the risen more than when it becomes a question of motion. In lieu of one of the most delightful means of conveyance, the jinrikisha, — which, with the hansom cab, is in some sort the poetry of transport, — one finds himself a prey to that instrument of torture, the native box; for there is not a single wheel in Korea. The thing remains uninvented. That veritable round of pleasure, as it is to many, has no existence there. But even to one who looks upon it with impartial vision, simply as a means of shortening distance and devoid of itinerary delight, not to have it at all is as great a discomfort as it is interesting as a phenomenon.

Here are a people who have never reached that stage in practical physics where the immense use of the wheel as a factor in transportation is discovered, — indeed, have not even reached the point where the thing is invented at all. We have not here so much as the Church and State phase of its introduction; for commonly before it comes to be honored as an article of use, it is used as an article of honor. It is met with first in ceremonials, religious or royal. It figures as a car of state, in which now a king, now an effigy of the gods, is dragged slowly along in the pageant of procession. As such it existed in Japan. And yet so little real acquaintance with its peculiar properties does this betoken, that when a few years ago the first wheeled vehicle for

general use was invented, and by a European too, the Japanese called it simply a "wheel." In revenge, as it were, for the neglect, the invention has thriven exceedingly throughout the far-East, — this "man-power car," as the Chinese call it. One finds it as far from its birthplace as Singapore, where it is drawn, comically enough, by the lazy though mercenary Chinaman, and yet, thus handicapped, competes with horse and carriage. With one of these vehicles still struggling along with us over the uneven path, we emerged, after a couple of hours' journey, upon the top of a short rise, and upon a view quite out of proportion to the size of the hillock that gave it. Beginning at our feet, and occupying not only the foreground but all the middle distance, lay spread out before us an immense plain of sand. It would have seemed limitless but for the ranges of mountains that rose beyond. Scattered over its surface could be seen black and white dots in irregular files, going and coming like trains of ants. They were figures walking, of men and bulls of burden, and marked the highway to the capital. The main road, never very well defined at best, coming upon the vast sand tract, is utterly lost, and separates into filaments as a stream in falling is scattered into drops; and the various paths, continued by custom as they were created by caprice, divide at will to unite again at the ferry at the further end. For the plain is the bed of the river Han in the spring-time of its fulness; at all other seasons the stream follows a much narrower pathway. It cannot be made out across the sand; for it clings to the edge of the bluffs as if fearing to lose itself in the sameness of the waste, and its banks on the nearer side are sufficient to hide it from view. In winter it lies gathered into a deep sullen stream, half asleep under its coverlid of ice.

It is called at this point the river Han, but this is not the name it bears throughout its length. Korean rivers remind

one of the oft remarried. The same stream bears a different name for every few miles of its course. *Née* Miss Coldstream up among the mountains, she no sooner gets into the world than she changes her name for another given her by the land she blesses. As she flows on, time and distance tear her from her love, but only to wed her to another. And so it goes on, a new name taking the place of the old, until at last she too disappears into her Nirvana, the sea.

"Han" means "Chinese." It is the name of that dynasty which had the greatest influence on Korea, and the one under which she first conformed herself to Chinese thought. The Chinese, among their other self-given appellatives, have always been prone to call themselves after their ruling dynasty. Most naturally, therefore, other nations, on making their acquaintance, learned to call them by the name they gave themselves; and then, getting accustomed to it, continued its use long after the Chinese had given it up, — a curious instance, indeed, of being more conservative than the most conservative people in the world. It was in this way that we came to get our name for the country, — China, — from the Tsin dynasty. The Malays so mispronounced what they heard; and the first Europeans, imitating them, still further mangled it. With Korea the case was slightly different. Being a neighbor, and also for centuries a tributary, she has never since the first been behind the age. Her people use "Han" as we might have used "Tudor" or "Hanoverian" in speaking of anything English, if only the ruling house in Great Britain had given its cognomen to the land. The name, therefore, carries on its face a history and a date. The date is of five hundred years ago; and the history will be better told when I come to speak of Söul itself, with whose history the name of the river is closely bound up.

After a most wearisome toil over the sand, which seemed to the muscles even more endless than it had looked to the eye,

and just as I had finally made up my mind to the belief that a small creek at the place where we had entered the expanse must have been the river, — for we had now got almost under the cliffs, and there seemed no room left for a river, — we came upon it. It was a sheet of ice, through which, in one spot, a passage had been cut for the ferry-boats, and the dark green of the water took on a more brilliant color from being reflected from the pale blue transparent ice. The river was evidently quite deep at this point, and the banks descended somewhat abruptly, even on the side away from the cliffs. Although it is seventy miles from this point by the river itself to the sea, the tide is felt many miles farther still up-stream. This does not preclude the fact of a strong current when the tide is out, as the rise is so great at the river's mouth. The ferry-boats were large scows, flat-bottomed, into which we all got, — men, palanquins, jinrikisha, horses, and bulls. It was so primitive a method as to be eminently democratic. There are places in the world where one would not be over-desirous of crossing with a domestic menagerie; but here the beasts were as quiet and well-behaved as any of the other passengers. It speaks much for one side of the character of the people, that they have so humanizing an influence upon the brute creation. This is a point in which we should do well to copy the manners of the far-East. Our very nomenclature points to a vicious state of things. We talk about breaking in a horse, and we find sometimes a good deal of difficulty in doing so. We might as well talk of breaking a creeper we were trying to train on a wall. We allow the animal to grow up in as nearly wild a state as possible, and then, all of a sudden, at our caprice, he is expected to become tame. No wonder coercion is necessary, and no wonder it rarely wholly succeeds. Throughout the far-East both horses and cattle — which means, for beasts of burden, in Japan both cows and bulls, in Korea only the latter — grow



RIVER SUBURBS OF SÖUL.

up to labor from their birth, in anticipation long before it becomes a fact, and are treated with gentleness all their lives. In Japan, colts always run beside their dams on transport journeys; and thus, from the moment they can amble, begin their apprenticeship by learning the roads. As they get a little bigger, a wisp of straw is tied to their backs to simulate a burden, and give them the feeling without the fatigue. Then, as they become stronger still, a real load, proportioned to their youth, is put upon them, which is gradually increased as they are able to bear it, until they attain adult stature and adult habits together.

On the further side of the ferry begin what may be called the suburbs of the city of Söul, — a series of detached villages, gradually consolidating as you approach the city proper. They are the river-ports of the capital. What little commerce by sea is carried on, passes through them. The banks of the river are lined with the masts of the native craft, like a thicket of bamboo; and when a fair wind gives them a chance, they spread their sails and sweep slowly down the river.

The distance from here to the city gates is about one and a half miles. Leaving the river banks, we toiled slowly upward, now through narrow lanes between the low mud walls of the houses, — for few of them here belong to the better class, — now on raised paths between the rice-fields. Men and boys collected in knots, and stared curiously at the passing procession. Though almost hidden from view in the inside of our itinerant boxes, some lynx-eyed loiterer among the crowd spied the one strange figure within and passed the word to his fellows. The less curious only stopped in their walk and turned slowly round, as if on pivots, their eyes remaining fixed on the moving sight; while the more inquisitive and audacious made no scruple to bend down and peer in, sometimes almost thrusting their heads inside the box itself. In spite of being thus a prey

to curiosity, their demeanor was dignified, much more so than would have been true in Japan, and slightly better even than in China; and though they differed in expression somewhat, I cannot say that I think them either more inquisitive or ruder than is the case at home.

The trail gradually became steeper, entered a defile, and passing through a cut in the hills emerged upon other suburbs more densely populated than those below. The travel increased, the houses thickened; we turned a corner, and the great walled city of Korea lay spread out at our feet.

I have seen sights as beautiful, as strange, before; but I never beheld anything that so completely realized the fancies of my boyish dreams as what I stood gazing upon then. There they all lay spread out before me as if conjured up to life, — the imaginations of the time when, as a lad, my thoughts sped away from the pages of the "Arabian Nights" to the dreamy Orient. In front of me rose the south gate, — by name, "The Gate of Everlasting Ceremony," — one of the eight clasps of the city's girdle. On either hand stretched a crenellated wall, encircling as with an arm the spot it loved. Protected within, nestling to it for safety from without, huddled the low one-storied houses, — a sea of roofs, some tiled, some thatched. I seemed to recognize the very spot where the princess of my youth was let over the wall and made good her escape. I saw the house where the robbers rendezvoused on the night before the deed. The men I descried walking about, bore the look of those with whose lives the old tales had made me familiar. It was all there before me. It was all real, and I was myself an actor in the scene.

Entranced, oblivious, I was at last roused from my reverie by a voice at my side begging me to enter my palanquin; for it was highly undignified, it pleaded, to walk where one could

be observed. I acquiesced; and as I stepped inside, felt as if the act was in some sort an entrance to the life of which it unavoidably shut out the vision.

We descended, a few hundred yards, into the thick of the throng, and amid the bustle of pedestrians, palanquins, and bulls of burden, — the ebb and flow of the tide of Korean life, — were carried through the southern gateway of Söul.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ENTRY INTO SÖUL.

ONCE through the gate, I found myself in the midst of one of the main thoroughfares of the city. The street was thronged. Men in crowds, clad in their white-flowing robes, were slowly passing to and fro. There was the appearance of being busy, without any of its hurry. The greater number were moving, but their motions were slow and dignified. There was bustle, too, after its kind, yet all without speed. Bulls of burden plodded along in the centre of the road; while every now and then some horse with his rider ambled by, giving to the whole, by contrast, a seeming dash of liveliness. Pedestrians journeyed more particularly on the sides, yet there were plenty of them in the middle; nor was there any line of demarcation between the two kinds of travel, — no sidewalk to separate man from beast. One level breadth, the street stretched from booth to booth. Only just as it touched the houses, was there any break in its uniformity. By the side of these ran a narrow ditch, half gutter, half moat. The affair is probably related to both ideas. It is now certainly used as a gutter, and it was in all probability descended from a species of ancestral moat; for both here and in Japan, where the same thing exists, it has very much the look of one. This gutter was hidden from view, in the street through which we were being carried, by the rows of booths which occupied the side of the

highway; for, wide as the street looked now, it was, in fact, much wider still. Nor was it so crooked as it appeared. This effect, again, was due to the booths. These booths were for the greater part small open-air shops. As they were as large as the houses, or nearly so, and were permanent, not temporary structures, it was not till some time afterwards that I learnt that they were only intruders. Each stood by itself, and without the slightest regard to the position of its neighbors. The only rule seemed to be that they should not encroach too far upon the thoroughfare. The highway was very much like a river with a superabundance of islands in it, and the current kept the centre of the stream clear. This trespassing upon the public domain is common to most of the wider streets. They were left so broad, originally, that the people deemed them a waste of space, and have appropriated a part of them to individual uses. In ordinary times the practice has been no hindrance to travel; for the street is really sufficient for its purposes, as it is. But every now and then the king decides upon a promenade, and then there is no room for the royal procession. On such occasions the booths are all taken away, and the street swept and garnished of the artificially grown fungus. The next day they all make their appearance again, as if nothing had happened to disturb them. A short time ago, a minister, imbued with the spirit of reform, issued an edict abolishing the century-sanctioned squatters. But the measure was so unpopular that it had to be revoked. Even in so downtrodden a people as the despotically ruled Koreans there was still enough of humanity left to resent being made tidy. Who has not felt the same intense aversion to having his littered room put in order for him?

Meanwhile we went on and on, until it seemed to me that the city was interminable. That the view I got of it was through the tiny windows of a box, did not tend to diminish its apparent

size. Besides, within the box was the old discomfort, — cold and cramp; and I will confess that in my then state of mind the sight of the inhabitants did not afford me nearly so much pleasure as a glimpse of me seemed to give them. At last, after a couple of miles of street, — as I afterwards discovered the distance to be, — we turned sharply to the left, passed through a gateway, traversed a courtyard, passed under another gateway, and entering a second courtyard were deposited on the ground.

The long journey was ended. I stood within the threshold of what had been prepared for me as my home, on this the other side of our globe.

But though I had crossed two thresholds already, I was destined to pass over several more, wind in and out through a labyrinth of buildings, and finally ascend a short flight of steps before I was at last ushered into a handsome room, in which I was invited to sit down. The request was meant, too, in European fashion; for, on looking about, I saw foreign chairs and a table. These, it afterwards appeared, were given a short time before to his Majesty, and had been sent from the palace to furnish the house. The escort then produced a box of European biscuit, and opened some beer. Everybody gave me a warm welcome, but no fire. I sat, smiled, and shivered. My good hosts were to all appearances insensible to cold. Later, on donning their dress, I discovered the reason. Of course, tea was served to us at once, and the subterranean oven was immediately kindled; but it was a long time before I could swallow the one for its heat, or feel the effects of the other for the want of it.

The sliding-doors, being negligently left open, contributed nothing to an increase in the temperature of the room. When I began to get the reins of household government into my own hands, on the following day, I suggested that they should be

kept shut. Those appointed to see to my comfort replied that they would do all in their power to have it so, but that they very much doubted their ability to succeed; for the servants, they said, were not in the habit of paying the subject any attention, and it would be impossible to train them to it. It is, at times, a disheartening truth that doors in Korea are made rather for the purpose of being opened than shut; and that servants are servants only in name.

House-warming (here most literally applied) well begun, I was conducted over the rambling collection of houses which was to be mine as long as I chose to remain in it. It was a set of buildings so connected as to give the idea of a suite of rooms seen from within and a suite of houses looked at from without. It was known as the Guest-house of the Foreign Office. This was a recent title. Before this it had belonged in turn to various Koreans; among the last, to Min, the present court favorite. It had almost as many gardens and courts as it had buildings, and one might easily have lost himself while still strictly within the limits of his own dwelling. As to the whole compound, of which it formed the northeastern corner, there was so much of it that simply to enumerate the parts would be an unpardonable presumption upon the reader's patience. By the time I had mastered its intricacies, I had learnt the rest of Söul pretty well by heart.

As for the interior, it was furnished partly from royal and Foreign Office loans, and partly from native attempts to copy foreign descriptions. Besides the chairs and tables above-mentioned, there were some wooden wash-stands, made in Korea, — the hasty inventions of genius. Then there was my bedstead. It might, with more propriety, be described as a bed-instead. It was a rectangular box, made of pasteboard and thin strips of wood, about a foot high. On this was spread a futon, or quilt, upon which I laid my sheets and blankets. These hybrids

were the welcome to those diplomatists whom the opening of the Hermit Land had brought to Söul.

In my tour of inspection I came across another hybrid, — a most singular production. It was a painting on one of the walls. It purported to be a circular opening, to give, there on the flat wall, a vista into student land. It represented the shelves of a bookcase, its compartments filled with the helps to learning. In one were some Korean books, not all rigidly upright, but leaning against one another as if overcome by the weight of the wisdom they contained; in another, brushes in marble stands; in a third, the ink-slabs; and so on. Truly, an *experimentum horribile in corpore vili.* It was evidently the *chef-d'œuvre* of some artist who had made a voyage to Shanghai and, becoming enamoured of European art, had tried to reproduce its worst variety, prostituting the details of his daily life in the attempt. It was more than a relief to turn to the native flower-pictures on the opposite door.

With the exception of the few pieces of furniture, the house was still in pure Korean garb; and, for a Korean house, it was a very rich one. There were scattered through it the usual painted scenes and painted panels. The interior of the particular house which constituted my sitting-room was especially handsome. The whole of one end of it was covered with a picture representing a flock of wild geese alighting. A circular opening, closed with sliding screens, — not an uncommon form of aperture, — connected with the rest of the suite; and on these sliding screens were two paintings, — an owl in the moonlight on the inner side, and a sort of triumph of a Korean Galatea on the outer.

The makeshifts of furniture seemed like intruders, they looked so out of place with their surroundings; yet they were the foundations upon which the best of native intentions was to rear my domestic happiness. The desire was great, but the

means, to our thinking, scanty; for the servants were as incompetent as the appliances were wanting. One's every-day routine is commonly considered sacred, probably from being too dull to tell. It is a secret which we jealously guard, because we fondly believe that to be distinctive of ourselves which a moment's thought would teach us to be the common heirloom of mankind. But in this case the situation had in it something original. The mode was not a routine, but an experiment. It was neither Korean simplicity nor European luxury. It was a sort of cross between the two, — one peculiar to the time and place, — which, in its exact details, will probably never be repeated. I may be said to have lived on inventions of native ingenuity, and to have tasted dishes which, on the part of the cook, were experiments justified only by success; for he was as new to the ingredients as I was myself. He was forever getting hold of something strange, and trying his hand on it; and I must say his talent was equal to the emergency. As I have said, he was a Nagasaki man, whom the Koreans had brought over for me from Japan. He proved to be a jewel. At first he seemed homesick, and inquired anxiously how long it would be before we sailed. But the Jap is wily. He was eager for departure, not that he might return to his native land, but because he had conceived the ambitious project of founding the first foreign restaurant in Sönl. But he never volunteered this to me, and only acknowledged the intention when directly taxed with it, on the occasion of bidding me good-by at the sea-coast, months after, though he was about to stay behind in Korea for the purpose. I had learnt the fact from one who had made him offers for the future, which the man had refused. So I left him at Chemulpo. Whether he carried out his scheme, and whether, if he did, he survived the massacres of the next December, I never heard. But he was a good servant to me.

All the other servants were Korean. There were so many of them that I never so much as took the pains to learn the names of more than one or two; and I never was sure of their exact number.

Details of one's household arrangements sound sadly out of place in a description of the charmed valley of Rasselas. There is something almost belittling in our modern conveniences. As for the feebler minds in a community, they actually worship these expressions of the mind, its images of wood and stone, firmly believing that they are thus showing their superior nineteenth-century civilization. One sometimes wonders how far some of those who affect them the most patronizingly, would get, if left to their own unaided devices to originate. On the other hand, there is a certain grandeur in the simplicity of the life of an Oriental. He almost rises above the body by neglecting to occupy himself with its momentary comforts. Except, perhaps, for his peculiar fondness for eating, the Korean is no exception to the general rule. However large his house, he is content to inhabit but one room. He sleeps in it at night; he eats, studies, and lives there by day. Thick quilts, upon which he and his visitors squat, cover a part of the oil-paper floor; and at one end, facing the entrance, is a low table, eight inches high and not much wider or broader, that holds his writing materials. For his life centres upon his brush: it is to him the medium of expression of both those arts in which alone he lives, — painting and poetry. His walls are hung with pictures, and his floor littered with books and rolls of writing; for he is always *in petto*, if not in fact, at once artist and poet.

Two functionaries were appointed to look after me. One of these lived in a part of the suite of houses. He was a colonel in the army, my old friend of the escort. His business was to act as head of the household and officer in charge

of the treasury. He was as good and kind a soul as ever walked this earth, and very quiet and deliberate. He seemed to radiate a mild glow of content whenever he came in to see me. The other was one of the secretaries of the Foreign Office. His duty consisted in periodically visiting me, — once a day on the average, — discovering what I might want beyond what lay at hand, and seeing to its fulfilling. The Sa Kwan — such was his title — was a most celebrated folk-lorist. He was admirably adapted to his temporary office, for he was a born entertainer. In any other land he would have been a diner-out. The stories he could tell and the legends he knew would fill a volume by themselves. Superstition had consecrated him one of her high-priests. He was a consummate Korean mythologist, except that he believed what he narrated.

CHAPTER IX.

A WALLED CITY.

THE name "Söul" means simply "capital." There is nothing very original in this name. It lacks even the trifling merit of spontaneity. Though the word is pure Korean, the idea is borrowed. It is an imitation of the Chinese assumption of peerlessness.

To an inhabitant of the Middle Kingdom, there is nothing to be compared, in dignity or importance, with his own land. The very name he gave it betrays the feeling. He himself stood at the centre, all else upon the outskirts. Pekin and Nankin were to him "the northern and southern capitals," in all the dignity of simplicity, because to him they had no peers. In copying, therefore, the customs of China, the Koreans thought it fine to ape its pomp. What the Chinese had taken for granted, they must needs assume. They had not the blindness of self-conceit to plead, for their own model was but too evidently their superior. The Japanese did the same. They were even more ludicrously illogical in their behavior; for they did not so much as clothe the idea in native garb, and thus give it at least the semblance of originality. Tokio and Saikio, "the eastern and western capitals," are not only borrowed in thought, but the very expressions are mispronounced Chinese. Thus their desire to seem as great prevented them from ever seeming greater; for, in lowering their aim to copy a title, they necessarily lost all inducement to surpass it.

Söul is the name by which the capital is commonly known; but there is another which even more marks an intellectual dependence upon China in the past. This will be better given and explained when we shall have glanced at the situation of the city.

The site of the city of Söul is very striking. An amphitheatre of high peaks almost completely encloses a small circular valley two to three miles across. In this little valley, thus cut off by Nature from the rest of the world, stands the capital of the Hermit Land. Round about towers the circle of hills, whose slopes on the one side seem placed to give panoramas of the life at their feet, while on the other they form a barrier against the intrusion of the outer world. Their bases rise with considerable abruptness from the little stretch of level ground, and their summits are fringed with crags and pinnacles that continue still to defy the levelling forces at work around them. The nakedness of the land — characteristic of this part of Korea — here has a touch of grandeur in it, and the bare granite rocks are all the more imposing for being destitute of vegetation. The highest peak of all is called, in Korean, "The Three peaked Mountain." But the French named it better when, in 1866, on the occasion of their warlike demonstration against Korea, they had it as a beacon before them on their journey up the river. They called it "The Mountain of the Cock's-comb," as its jagged peaks flushed red in the first rays of the rising sun, and, like its namesake, seemed to awake before the rest of the world to tell of the new day to the valley still slumbering in the mist. Its exact height is not known, for it has never been measured; but all that there is of it is seen, which is so rarely the case with mountains, — for the valley itself, whence you view it, is almost on a level with the sea. In winter it is draped in snow; for its peaks are so sharp that it is only in places that the snow can find a lodging

and glisten here and there in silvery streaks against the grayer rock. Upon its slopes tigers are said to abound, and leopards certainly exist. Its foot-hills are composed principally of a sort of sand, and support only a stunted species of pine, which grows as sparsely as it grows small. The formation of these foot-hills is most curious. They resemble ridges in the sand of some sea-beach which is tilted at a considerable angle. They are due partly to natural formation and partly to the washing out of the rains. On considering such a mountain-chain, — the common type in this part of Korea, — you cannot help thinking of some past great passion of the earth which has burnt itself out and left behind only a superbly grand monument of ashes.

Nearer to the city, resting like the pinnacle of some supporting buttress upon the foot of the Cock's-comb, is the North Hill; and opposite it, across the amphitheatre, rises the South Mountain. The former is eleven hundred, the latter eight hundred, feet above the houses. Both are wooded to their summits, — the South Mountain heavily, the North Hill only scantily, — and both are equally untenanted by man.

So striking a situation is not the result of accident. The city of Söul is a monument to the last dynastic revolution in Korea. On the overthrow of the then ruling house, it was founded by the successful insurgent as the capital for his new line. Each dynasty in Korea has had its own capital, much as a private individual would possess his own house. The usurper's first care, therefore, after seating himself on the vacant throne, was to move this throne to a new spot. He came by his new dignity in some sort accidentally. He was a general by the name of Tai Jo, and on the occasion of one of the many invasions by the Chinese, was sent to repel the invaders. Realizing the futility of the attempt, he summoned a council of war, and announced his intention of treating with

the enemy and then returning home. He did so; and this led, not unnaturally, to a breach between him and the king, which ended in his deposing his Majesty and reigning in his stead.

For Korean national interests the success of the so-called patriot was most unfortunate. Right as his judgment may have been in regarding the result of a war with China as disastrous to his country, and wise as it undoubtedly was to make what terms he could, his subsequent wholesale adoption of Chinese customs was suicidal. He made of his country not only a tributary of China, but her intellectual slave; for at this time swept in that deluge of Confucianism which has swamped the land to this day. For centuries, indeed, Korea had borrowed, not one thing but many, from the court at Pekin; but now everything had to be modelled after foreign thought. The results were even more far-reaching, as we shall see later, than Tai Jo could possibly have foreseen or even hoped.

Dazzled by the brilliancy of the dynasty which had then just begun its reign in China, called for its greatness the Ming, or "Bright," he did not hesitate to perpetuate, by the names he chose, his unbounded admiration. To his capital fell the first badge of Sinicomania. He called it Han Yang, or "The Sunshine of China;" and such, in both fact and feeling, he meant it to be. To do this, he selected, in the first place, a spot which Nature herself had fortified, and then he set himself to add to Nature's work. Along the very summit of the mountains he built a wall. Here, unfortunately for his Chinese predilections, the sarcasm of destiny willed that he should perforce follow a Tartar custom. Very possibly he was ignorant that it was such. The wall was of the same kind, indeed, as those which surround all large Chinese cities, and has its most famous example in the so-called Great Wall of China. But in spite of a most natural inference, the Great Wall of China is not Chinese. To surround

one's cities or one's country with walls is not a Chinese idea. It was a practice brought in by the conquering Tartar hordes. To them are due the hundreds of miles of barrier that defend the Middle Kingdom on the north. They built these colossal ramparts to keep out their own kinsmen, lest the latter should follow in their footsteps, and deprive them in their turn of what they had won.

The wall of Söul is imposing in itself; in position, it is wellnigh matchless. In building it, difficulty was ignored and height forgotten. From whatever point you gaze, within the city or without, it is one of the most striking features of a most striking landscape. Rising steadily from the south gate, it climbs the mountain to its very top, and now dips, now rises, as it follows the irregularities of the summit. At one time it disappears behind some nearer spur, and then again comes into view higher still on a projecting ridge. It falls to meet the northeast gate, at the summit of a pass, descending, apparently, only because it must, and starts steeply up again to the high peaks of the Cock's-comb. There it winds in and out, now lost, now reappearing, till distance merges it with the mountain's mass. Like some great python, it lies coiled about the city, stretched in lazy slumber along the very highest points, — over peaks where it can, along passes where it must.

From without, the wall looks formidable enough. It appears to be a solid mass of masonry. In truth, like all these walls, it is a shell of granite blocks enclosing earth. Wherever the ground is level, its height, except for its outside parapet, is the same on both sides. But in places where a steep descent offers an opportunity, the falling away of the ground is taken advantage of, and the wall gains in height on the outer side as much as is rendered unnecessary on the inner. The wall is crenellated along its outer edge by a parapet, and the embrasures and loopholes give it at a little distance the appearance,

to modern vision, of a train of cars. Behind the parapet runs a broad pathway of beaten earth, to wander along which is by far the loveliest walk in the city. Like everything else, the wall is sadly out of repair, and loses yearly in strength what it gains in picturesqueness. As you stroll along its top, you come, on the inner edge, upon great chasms that yawn obstructingly at your feet, where some block has given way, and the rains have washed out a gully that falls away toward the town. Great trees in the neighboring gardens raise their heads above the wall, and send out protecting branches to shield it from the sun. Destruction has not as yet overtaken the outer edge, because ruin has been stayed by man. The path itself now rises, now falls, turns here to the left hand, and there sweeps round in a grand curve to the right as it follows the wall in its endless twistings and turnings; while below lies spread out the city on the one side, and on the other is a sheer descent to the level of the plain.

At irregular intervals stand the eight gates. In theory they stand at the cardinal points and their half-way divisions. Practically, they stand where they may. They are as imposing as they are important; and they are among the finest buildings in the city, unless it be contended that they are outside it. For each, though connected with the wall, is, in truth, a building in itself. They resemble houses raised on perforated foundations. So much so, indeed, that as you approach one of them from the top of the wall, you would imagine that you stood on a level with the ground before some house of the better class. You almost forget that underneath you is a solid arch of stone, till looking down you catch sight of the crowd perpetually swallowed up on the one side, and disgorged again on the other. Fitting into this arch, that from above seems a tunnel, are massive wooden gates, four inches thick, sheathed with iron.

These gateways have names in keeping with their importance. The west gate is called "The Gate of Bright Amiability;" the south gate, "The Gate of High Ceremony;" and the east gate, "The Gate of Elevated Humanity." The various gates differ in size, the east and south gates being much the largest. Some of the gates, too, are consecrated to particular uses. The southwest gate is the gate of criminals; and the southeast one, the gate of corpses. A criminal condemned to be beheaded is always taken outside the city for the execution, and the procession invariably passes out through the southwest gate. To pass out by any other gate would be to defile that gate. The same is the case with the southeast gate for the dead. Only the body of a dead king may be borne through any other. This gate is also called "The Gate of Drainage," because the river flows out beside it. Lastly, the north gate stands high upon the Cock's-comb. It is always kept shut, except at such times as it may be needed as a means of escape for his Majesty; for this purpose alone is it used.

CHAPTER X.

THE WATCH-FIRES ON THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN.

IF you should chance to be abroad in the streets of Söul in the gloaming, that lingering farewell of the day that is gone, your eyes, as they followed your thoughts from the gloom of the highway to the fading glory in heaven, would surely rest upon the towering form of Nam San, or the South Mountain. Dark, mighty, mysterious in the twilight, its mass stands out in bold relief against the southern sky. In this light it seems fairly to overhang the city, as if about to fall upon and cover by night what it has guarded by day. Instinctively you watch it as it slowly disappears into the growing darkness of the sky around. Just as it is lost in the gloom, and your look, freed from the spell, returns to the street, and a shudder creeps over you to find that all has become suddenly so dark, four little stars flash out where the top of the mountain lay a moment before. Poised so high in the heavens, they might well be the light from other worlds. They are the watch-fires on Nam San, — the nightly sign to the capital that all is well.

Stars they look to be; bonfires they really are. And the word is the true symbol of their meaning. They are lighted, not as warnings of danger, but as signs that throughout Korea all is security and peace. For fifteen minutes they burn there to tell Söul of the message from the provinces, and then they vanish again into the night.

The system of which they are the final link in the chain extends throughout the length and breadth of the land. It is a sort of light telegraphy. On prominent heights along the entire sea-coast and across the northern land-frontier of the kingdom are distributed cairns for bonfires. They gird the land like a cordon of sentries. Within sight of these, to take up and transmit the message they send every night, are posted others on the tops of neighboring hills; and so they succeed each other, one hill telling the next, till the news reaches the central point of each province. From these centres the message is sent along in like manner from point to point, on towards Söul, till at last all are received together upon the top of the South Mountain.

To telegraph good or bad news, as the case may be, there is an elaborate code of signals. On the summit of Nam San are five cairns. In times of peace, four only of these are lighted; and each of the four, respectively, represents two out of the eight provinces into which Korea is divided. As peace is fortunately the normal state, the system in this case is the simplest possible. The danger-signals are complicated, so complicated that to give a careful account of them here would be useless. We should be making an exposition of the signal service of the Korean War Department. An example or two will serve as a sufficient illustration. If, for instance, an enemy makes his appearance off a certain province, say Chullado, an extra bonfire is built close to the main one that represents the province of Chullado, and to its right, its left side being allotted to the use of the other province which it represents. Then, again, in times of danger other bonfires are lighted above the first in number, according to the imminence of the danger, — one when the enemy are observed off the coast or near the frontier, two when they are about to cross it or disembark, three when they have done so, and four when the fighting

has actually begun. As I never saw them lighted, I leave to the reader the difficult task of understanding their possible disposition. The system is carefully expounded in Korean books on the subject.

In the day-time the cairns themselves, even when you know where to look, can barely be made out from the city, — from the plain, it would be more exact to say; for they lie, in fact, within the city's wall. Although they are separated from the mass of houses by the whole mountain-side, which is covered with forest, they are nevertheless a more integral part of Söul than the densely settled suburbs that nestle to her outside the gates. For the city's wall runs directly over the middle of the mountain; it climbs by a series of steps — so steep is the profile of the rise — to the summit, tops a sharp ridge, and descends again in the same fashion on the other side. Taken in connection with the mountain itself, it is certainly one of the highest fortifications in the world, — eight hundred feet of Nature's breastwork, topped by fifteen feet more of man's. But for Söul this is, relatively, rather low; on the north the height is many times as great.

Here, as elsewhere, advantage has been taken of the ridge. The wall has been placed just beyond the highest point, so that but one side of it had to be built. As you stand upon it, your look sweeps down through the forest, off into the distance, to where the river Han, reflecting the sun, gleams like a belt of silver in the plain. In one vast semicircle it girdles the amphitheatre of peaks that surround Söul; and beyond it rises range behind range of mountains, like the billows of a frozen sea for the snow on them. At this height villages merge into their surroundings, and you are left to commune alone with a scene as grandly desolate as the ice and snow that cover it.

Parallel to the wall, on the other side of the narrow ridge that makes the summit, which is of the form of a thin long

saddle, and rises somewhat higher on both sides than in the middle, are built five well-like structures of stone. They are of the same form as the wells, — circular, — and are of about the same diameter, — five feet across. These are the cairns.

On the southern edge of the ridge stands a house for the shelter of the people engaged in tending the watch-fires, and near it is a small temple. Its isolation preserves it, for it is against the law that it should exist within the city walls; and technically, though hardly for practical purposes, it does lie within them. It corresponds to a shinto shrine, but with images, paintings, and rich and gayly colored ornaments crowding its eight feet by ten in a way quite unlike the stern simplicity of its counterpart in Japan. Its isolation was also the cause of its being. The temple is said to have been built in memory of the last king of the last dynasty. The king himself does not lie buried there; but after Söul was founded, the new line, which owed its existence to the extinction of the one before, resolved in this inexpensive manner to honor its predecessor. This place was fixed upon for a site, first, because it was high, and thus would do the king the greatest honor, and secondly, because it was remote, and so would do the people the least harm.

The ridge itself is a little bit of park land, where grand old trees possess, in undisputed sovereignty, their own square rods of earth, and the wide branches arch, in lordly protection, over a level greensward of silky mountain grass. Below, on the steep slope, hustling one another for pre-eminence, grow the rank and file of a fairly primeval forest. Through vistas in this you can catch glimpses of the city far below, — a mass of purplish-black roofs in a great hollow towered over by sharp and jagged peaks. You seem to be invading its privacy, looking down upon it thus, — to be

gazing from the standpoint of another world upon some charmed valley.

But a little below the summit, where the shoulder of the mountain falls abruptly away, is a view yet finer still. It is a place where the ledges break suddenly off, and the trees can find no foothold on the bare rock above, and no slope to cling to for some tens of feet below. It is a spot, chosen by Nature, from which to scan the city at your feet. You are so high above the town, and yet so near it, that it lies there like a map spread out before you, — a map that is alive. The streets come out like bright ribbons between the dusky houses, and the men in their light dresses look like slowly moving white dots as they walk along them. And yet there is no sound; it is only a pantomime of the life of Söul.

Close under your feet, leading diagonally away on the right, is a very conspicuous thoroughfare. It is the main entrance to the city. It leads from the south gate, which lies concealed on the left, to a sort of square in the very heart of the city. On it the white dots are near enough to be made out as men walking. This street, as it advances, curves gradually to the left till it crosses on a stone bridge one of the dry streams, and then widens into the square. This square is a veritable human hive. On one side of it rise the only two-storied buildings in the place. They are at present tenanted by the largest merchants of Söul, who hire the buildings of the Government, into whose hands they have in some mysterious manner fallen. On the other side is the big bell, encased in a small house of its own.

At right angles to this street runs another from the east to the west gate. Running, as it does, almost directly across the line of vision, it is so hidden as to be indistinguishable. Considered both for its length and width, it is the most important street in the city. The other highway is the principal entrance; this is the principal internal thoroughfare of Söul.

Following it farther to the left, — that is, farther to the west, — you will see a very broad avenue branching off to the north. At the upper end of this is a large, conspicuous building. It is the outer gateway of the Old Palace. Even at this distance it is one of the most striking objects in the view. From it up to the base of the North Hill, — the conical peak directly across the valley, — stretch the Palace grounds. The two buildings that tower in its midst are the Audience Hall, on the right, and the Palace of Summer, on the left. Its enclosing wall can easily be made out, as it starts from the gate and sweeps around on either hand, meeting again on the slope.

To the right of the Old Palace, but separated from it by a portion of the city, are the New Palace grounds. Its wall is visible, but the buildings within are hidden by the trees. Between the two is the Foreign Office, fully two miles away from where we stand.

Just at our feet, with its back up against the base of the South Mountain, stand the buildings of the Japanese legation. From a flag-staff above it floats the Japanese ensign, the red ball on the white field. Here lives the little Japanese colony, — a true bit of transplanted Japan, — all alone in an alien land. Some of the legation have with them their wives, and many children play about its courtyards. It has its own force of soldiers, kept constantly recruited from home; its doctors, its policemen, — all that it can need to be sufficient to itself. The minister is as much a governor as a representative at a foreign court. Day and night the soldiers stand before the gateway of the legation buildings, and change guard as if it were a camp; and whenever the minister goes abroad, a certain number of them accompany him as escort. The soldiers are needed. Once before, and once since, that day when I looked down upon it, the legation has had to fight its way from Söul to the sea.

Over to the left is the American legation with its flag, — a large compound, with fine old houses, formerly a noble's palace. The compound of Von Möllendorff, the foreign member of the Foreign Office, stands in the centre of the panorama, between the two palaces, a little nearer to Nam San than the Foreign Office itself. Between us and the American legation rises a skeleton gateway, one of the two "Red Arrow Gates" of Söul. It foretells what is called "The South Set Apart Palace," now occupied by the resident Chinese commissioner.

These were the salient points, few in number, in the panorama, almost virgin to European eyes, that lay at my feet that day, as I gazed upon the capital of the Hermit Land; and back of all, in majestic grandeur, rose the serrated peaks of the great Cock's-comb.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOVERNMENT.

FOR two reasons it seems fitting to say something here on the subject which has given the title to this chapter. In a land where the Government is, in one sense, everything, it surely deserves mention; and courtesy would also seem to require a word where the same power has played the part of host. I therefore consider myself absolved for what may possibly be thought prosy.

In front of the Audience Hall of the Old Palace of Söul, — which is, perhaps, the finest building in Korea, and which, where king is country, may with a certain right be taken for the reception-room of the land, — there stand, facing the entrance and flanking on either hand the approach which leads from the innermost of the three gates to the first flight of steps, two rows of granite slabs. They are placed on end, upon small square pedestals, in the midst of the grass of the inner court, somewhat after the fashion of our gravestones; and like them, too, they have inscriptions carved upon their faces. With the exception of these inscriptions, they are all precisely alike, and follow one another at equal intervals on either side of the pathway. Each is exactly in line behind its predecessor, and the stones of the two rows correspond in position and lettering. There are eighteen of them arranged thus on a side.

A translation of the characters engraved upon them explains, seemingly, rather their position than their use. Beginning at the end toward the Audience Hall, the first stone bears the inscription, "the true first rank;" the stone behind it, "the following first rank;" the next, "the true second rank;" and so on to "the following ninth rank." But to him who knows how to read between the carved words, there seems almost a personality in the stones; for they are the outward expression of the spirit that shapes Korean society. They are mute emblems to the great god Ceremony, and embody, as it were, in granite, the *régime* of the land.

They are ceremonial bourns. They mark the limits of approach to the person of their sovereign permitted to the various ranks of officials. So far off must stand each rank in the Korean official oligarchy when, on occasions of governmental pageant, they come to assist at a royal reception. The ranks are the outward immaterial expression of office, just as the elaborate system of court clothes is the outward material expression of the ranks. They have nothing intrinsically to do with office; and yet each office has its own rank, to which, as a matter of course, a man is raised when he is appointed to that office. Many totally different offices possess the same rank, so that the stone slabs indicate both the Government, and what, for want of a better word, we may call social standing in Korea. We cannot call it a nobility, though it possesses many of its attributes, because, as we shall see later, there exists a nobility beside, but a nobility which, though indirectly powerful, directly commands neither obedience nor obsequiousness. In a book on court etiquette, whose weary, statistical-like pages of catalogue I have had translated, each office and its corresponding rank is most minutely described, from that of the crown prince to that of a maid-servant in the palace. Such a schedule is exceedingly interesting to those for whom the

posts are so many rungs of the ladder to fame, but endlessly tedious to any one beside.

The king of Korea is an absolute monarch. Divine by birth, he is omnipotent by heredity. But his will, though law, is transmitted to the people through an elaborate system of magistrates. Some of these are counsellors, some are only executors of the royal or vice-royal commands. All of them — the highest with the lowest — hold their positions directly from the sovereign, and any position is revocable at once at the king's good pleasure. In theory, therefore, each is independent of his fellows; in practice, of course, those who are the highest stand nearest to the royal ear, and can largely influence the appointments and removals of the lower magistracy. They not only have the power, but use it most iniquitously; for the administration of offices is a very lucrative profession.

Nearest to his Majesty stand the three great ministers of State, the State referring in its broadest sense to the whole land. They are consulted by his Majesty on all matters touching the kingdom. They are called the Counsellor of the Right, the Counsellor of the Middle, and the Counsellor of the Left. This is their order of precedence. They resemble the three great ministers of Japan.

Below them come the six departments of the Government. They are as follows: Ri Chyo, or the Department of the Interior; Ho Chyo, or the Department of the Treasury; Pyöng Chyo, or the Department of War; Ré Chyo, or the Department of Rites; Hyöng Chyo, or the Department of Justice; Kong Chyo, or the Department of Public Works.

Each of these is presided over by a Pan Sö ("decisive signature"). He is aided by several Cham Pan ("help to decide"), and by Cham Wi ("help to discuss"). As their name implies, the last are inferior to the Cham Pan in power, and are rather

advocates than judges. Both precede the secretaries of the department. The number of Cham Pan, of Cham Ui, and of the secretaries varies with the particular department. These compose the central Government.

Among the six, it will be noticed, is included none for foreign affairs. This was for the very good and sufficient reason that there were no foreign affairs to transact. The only intercourse the Koreans had with foreigners was forced upon them by China, and that was of the nature of tributary to superior. With other peoples, like the Manchus and the Japanese, they were only brought in contact by being occasionally conquered by them; and in such untoward emergencies they appointed special envoys to treat. It was only recently, in consequence of the first treaty with Japan, that the need of such a department came to be felt; and shortly after, it was created in addition to the other six.

The creation of this body necessitated by antithesis a home department, which was instituted a year later. In constitution, the Foreign Office was based upon the Chinese system, the Home Office upon the Japanese.

Next in position follow the governors of the different provinces. Each of them has six assistants. Instead of Chyo, these six departments of provincial government are called Bang, or "chamber." The heads of the chambers rank with the grade next below, the district magistrates; for each province is divided into several districts. Each district magistrate has in his turn six assistants. In fact, six seems to be a magic number in Korean bureaucracy. So the line goes down.

Then there are several unattached offices, so to speak, — the several military positions, the position of inspector of the coast, etc.

One man often holds many offices. For instance, one of the Cham Pan of the Foreign Office was at the same time governor

of the province of Kyöng Keui To, and held a high military position, and I know not what else to boot.

How are these officials appointed? Is such appointment entirely arbitrary, or is it subjected to any law? In answering this question we are brought face to face with one of the most singular, and all the more striking because one of the most fundamental, of Chinese phenomena; for it is not a product of Tartar, but of Chinese thought. Literature is in Korea the only portal to political power. In order to become eligible to the magistracy, a man must have passed several literary examinations. Only after he has received his diploma can he be appointed to office. The Koreans took the Chinese system, and have changed it simply in unimportant extrinsic details. With them, as with their models, the capacity for poetry and pedantry is the test of mind. To be able to write unlimited verse, and to interpret the Chinese classics with due reverential regard, are the qualities to win success. What in China is a species of literary worship of its own classics becomes in Korea the worship of another people's classics, and finds for devotion to the thoughts of a foreign past a parallel in the study of Greek and Latin during the Middle Ages in Europe, — a study kept alive by the monks and continued by scholars to the present day. A magistrate is, therefore, first a poet. Then he is, to a certainty, in what pertains to China and incidentally to his own country, a very learned man, though by no means necessarily a man of original thought. When Latin was still a password to respect in the House of Commons, English politics faintly suggested the present Korean state of things, only that what was there but an aid to influence one's colleagues is here an admission to the body itself.

In Korea, as in China, there are three grades of examinations, all of which must be passed by the candidate in due course. Unlike the Chinese custom, these examinations are

held exclusively in Söul. For the preliminary grade they take place every year; for the higher ones, only when his Majesty sees fit to appoint them. As soon as a young man — or, for the matter of that, he may be a very old man, for unsuccessful candidates may keep on trying as long as they like, and many of them grow gray in these praiseworthy but futile attempts — passes the final examination, he becomes potentially a magistrate. He does not at once always become so in fact, because the profession is somewhat overstocked as it is; but before long he is given some place or other, and after this his rise depends solely upon his ability to persuade his Majesty of the desirability of promoting him.

His position is purely personal. He transmits to his son only the plunder his office has enabled him to amass. His rank and his honors die with him.

The extreme rigor of the literary examinations is to some fortunate mortals tempered by the accident of noble birth. If a man is born a noble, heredity is allowed to count for something, and his poetry need not be so good nor his learning so exact as would otherwise be deemed necessary. Such blindness in the examiners is quite unrecognized, — every man is supposed to be judged alike and impartially, — but somehow it exists. And this introduces us to yet another factor in Korean society, — the lingering trace of an old nobility. There still exists in Korea, in spite of the levelling deluge of Confucianism that has swept the land, the surviving spirit of family prestige. Whether it is the remains of a feudal system such as existed in ancient times in China, and such as lasted till the other day in Japan, is a question. It is certainly a survival from the time of the old petty princes who, in early days, ruled each his little province till all were eventually conquered by one. This we know from the traditions of the present family names. While they lost their

former power, they kept its shadow in that they are still honored, though no longer obeyed. They have no particular political rights; but favoritism in the elections keeps the class alive, and enables them still to look down somewhat upon the *parvenus* whose individual ability has made them their peers in office and their equals before the law.

What with the ranks in station, the degrees of the examinations, the actual offices, and a trace of hereditary nobility, — all four of which are entirely different matters, — the subject suggests at first something of a ceremonial chaos, hopeless in its intricacy. But for a Korean its intricacies possess no mystery, for they have been from infancy his study. To him the subject wraps up in itself the whole aim of life. Intellect, ambition, gain, — all are to him embodied in the Government.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TRIAD OF PRINCIPLES.

THERE is among us a prevailing impression that the far-East — China, Korea, and Japan — is delightfully but hopelessly odd, and that the interest attaching to these lands lies solely in this irrational oddity. For any people to write backwards, to talk backwards, to sit upon their feet, to take off not their hats but their shoes on entering a house, and in countless other ways to conform to what seems more like a photographic negative of our own civilization than a companion picture, — this is indeed a social phenomenon to rouse the most sluggish curiosity; and then, with an admission that the sight is very interesting because so passing strange, the subject is dismissed and the interest is supposed to terminate. Partly from want of opportunity, partly from neglect, we open the eyes, shut the brain, and think we see.

In truth, the interest in it has but just been awakened; the life of it, its strength, is yet to come. It is because the far-East holds up the mirror to our own civilization, — a mirror that like all mirrors gives us back left for right, — because by her very oddities, as they strike us at first, we learn truly to criticise, examine, and realize our own way of doing things, that she is so very interesting. It is in this that her great attraction lies. It is for this that men have gone to Japan intending to stay weeks, and have tarried years. A far more

potent magnetism than the most delicious of climates, the wonderful urbanity of the people, the quaintness of the customs, are the vistas into the springs of the world's life, as a whole, that these customs open out to us, in the loadstone that holds us to the spot.

We cannot truly be said to know anything apart from its relations. Unless we realize the dissimilar, we do not fully appreciate what lies at our elbow. We may see or even do a thing, day after day, and yet awake some morning to discover that we never understood it. Habit blunts the perceptions. We insensibly confuse the accidental and the unimportant with the vital and the fundamental. But let us change our attitude toward the subject in question; let us see it from a slightly different point of view, and we begin to be aware of what it really is in a way we never were conscious of before. It is such a point of view that the far-East affords us in sociology.

Few people, we imagine, would assert, even to themselves, that the far-Oriental is not a man, — that is, that his constitution in mind or body is radically different from our own. And yet, in spite of this tacit consent to admit him to the human family, there is a secret tendency to overlook the principle that humanity is and must be human, — that is to say, that he is a being like unto ourselves, with like motives to urge, like reasoning to determine, his actions, and that our character is just the particular key made to fit the lock of his. It is a key grown rusty with time, perhaps; climate may have corroded and changed the lock; but, with a little patient study, it will at last turn and reveal to us more familiar sights than we had thought possible.

If, then, we admit that the extreme Oriental is a man, — that, traced far enough back, his genealogy and ours meet in a common point, — the contrasts we observe to-day in the two modes of life acquire a significance and possess an interest

far beyond what is afforded by the odd simply because it is such. Taken in connection with our own way of doing things, his, from its very dissimilarity, will yield us, as it were, an historical parallax for the determination of our common remote past and of the possibilities and adaptabilities of the human race. The greater the contrast, the greater the resulting parallax. The more diverse, therefore, the two races we study and compare, the more will it be possible to discover about sociology in general, if only we are able to mark the steps in the line of progress; for we are speaking of civilized nations. Were one of the two a savage tribe, we should discover from it only a reflection of its own past; barbarism being but the stagnation of society. But the peoples we have now before us are civilized peoples. Their condition is in most respects not so high as our own; in some ways it is higher. But the important point is that in both there has been an advance from a similar original state, although along two very different lines.

Now, of all the races upon the earth's surface, the Japanese race, and, closely allied to it, the Korean, are probably the farthest removed from our own. The broad expanse of the Pacific is now the birthplace of the day, because for many centuries it has been a gulf that has not been crossed save by waifs, the involuntary sport of ocean currents. Before this, probably, certain of the Mongol races did wander round it to the north; and to their dead civilizations in Mexico and Peru attaches an interest only just now beginning to receive its due. Roughly speaking, we may measure the degree of divergence in the customs of two peoples by the distance they live apart. In detail, of course, the criterion would not hold; but in general and for our present purpose it is in the main true. As we proceed from India westward we find a greater accentuation of what we call European; as we go eastward from it, an ever-increasing dissimilarity.

But, interesting as is the study of such comparative ethnology, it is not for the purpose of investigating it with reference to ourselves that I have spoken of the universal kinship of man. Here it is the converse I propose to touch upon. Important as is the knowledge of ourselves, we are at present engaged upon the study of our antipodes in longitude, if not strictly so in latitude. Now, in any sense to know them, it is not enough to glance at what we find, but in some sort, however hastily and briefly, to look backward till we meet with a past which is to us familiar in a way their differentiated present is not, and without such help never can become. It is not to expound the past, but to explain the present, that I ask, for a moment, the reader's attention.

There is another reason why such consideration is even superficially most valuable. Korea is not China; it is not Japan. This may seem an unnecessary remark, and especially in a book that purports to tell of Korea. But I can assure the reader that it is not. If he had been asked such questions as whether the pinching of the feet in Korea is not a horrible sight, when, as a matter of fact, such pinching is as unpractised and as condemned there as it is with us, — if such inferences were to be numbered by hundreds rather than by units, — he would realize that a *tabula rasa* of anticipatory misconceptions is first needed before anything can wisely be written thereon. Were they simply in appearances, a description might indeed be allowed to speak for itself; but, as is known to every painter, it is not alone those colors that lie on the surface that give the picture its effect, but others deeper down, whose existence the unpractised eye scarcely suspects.

To understand Korea, therefore, we shall perforce be obliged to consider, as briefly as possible, her relationship to China and

Japan. The position she bears and the position she has borne in the past to these two lands will lead us by inference still farther back, and reveal to us the springs from which her customs have flowed. We shall learn, at the same time, why these customs exist, and what they mean, — the motives, in short, which have caused her to assume at last what appears to us to be so curious a condition of society. By thus following out her past it will be found, as it seems to me, that there have been three great characteristics, partly individual, partly social, which have been especially conducive to the result; and I have called them, therefore, the triad of principles. They have acted and interacted upon one another, increasing each the other's individual effect, and yet each is in itself quite independent of the other two. These three principles are, — the quality of impersonality, the patriarchal system, and the position of woman. Following these principles as clues, the enigma will cease to be perplexing; and many a custom, so singular at first sight, will be found explicable in as natural a way as the simplest of those with which since childhood we have been familiar.

Before explaining the three influences which have played so large a part in the moulding of the far-Eastern character, — for it is not Korea alone that has been affected by them, — we must begin by examining the pedigree of the Korean people. This will lead us at once to their relationship to China and Japan.

As has been ably pointed out, there are two factors in the history of the evolution of the language of a race. They are similar in kind to those which help to form the character of an individual, — blood and education. What is true of the language of a race is equally true of race-characteristics. In short, two questions must be answered, — "Who are they?" and "By whom were they brought up?" Let us apply this scientific diagnosis to the Korean race.

First, then, as to their blood. Both Japanese and Koreans are Tartar peoples. They are distantly related to each other, and are still more remotely connected with the Manchus, the Mongols, and probably the Tartars, particularly so called, and the Turks. There is an old Japanese legend which allegorically hints at the kinship, but which national pride insists upon construing too literally, and thereby exposes to doubt and disbelief. I mention it here, not as a proof of a kinship otherwise known, but because it is in itself a most striking tale. It relates to the famous Japanese general Yoshitsune, perhaps the most celebrated warrior of that most warlike land. Defeated in a rebellion which he attempted against his brother, he disappeared at once and forever from the scene. As Yoshitsune he ceased to exist. What became of him was never known; and speculations as to his subsequent fate became in their turn the most fascinating of problems to imaginations of a certain class. Some said that he was dead. But this was too prosaic a termination to so illustrious a career to suit the dreamers. So a legend grew to the effect that, beaten, he travelled northward, until, crossing first to Yesso, thence to Saghalien, he at last arrived upon the continent of Asia; that his fertile brain came to the aid of his intense will, and that, smarting under the loss of that for which he had been striving, he resolved upon a magnificent revenge. He would mould to himself, from out the Mongols, a people who under his lead should overrun and conquer the world, and, incidentally to this great scheme of his, subdue and humble Japan. His most daring flights of fancy could hardly have exceeded the reality. His career partook of the supernatural. It seemed that he had but to wish, to see his desire fulfilled. To conquer China, subduing Korea as a detail in passing, and seat himself upon the dragon throne, was the work of a surprisingly short space of time. If his own had driven him from home, he was

amply revenged in the glory that encircled him now. Northern Asia was his, and even Europe trembled at his name, — for that name was Yenghiz Khan.

But if he was the Yoshitsune of yore, he never accomplished, in spite of his superb triumphs, the direct object of his revenge. Her position as an island saved Japan from being made to feel his power, — a power to which all else indeed bowed. So seldom does even the most successful career intersect its former path.

There are plenty of Japanese who firmly believe this tale, unsupported as it is by anything which can be called proof. But it seems more just to look upon it only as an instance of the immortality of fame. That he lived on in the thoughts of men prompted the belief that he must yet be alive somewhere in the flesh.

How closely related are the Koreans and the Japanese it is difficult to say, from the fact that, belonging to the so-called Turanian peoples, — that is, those for the most part without a known family relationship, — the language (always one of the strongest indications among Aryan or Semitic races) here becomes of little use to the determination of the connection. In Aryan or Semitic speech, root-forms are subject to such slow laws of variation that they become very important, and help to fix degrees of relationship with great nicety. Among Turanian languages they are of almost no account. They alter, like the quondam habitations of those who use them, the tents of their own nomadic tribes. A few decades suffice radically to change the words in use among a people. It is position in the sentence alone that is invariable. But this yields only the most distant of clues; for though the position in its turn is subject to the law of change, it is not so easy a matter to trace the steps in the process, so that two peoples quite closely connected in fact betray it no more than those who may be very far apart.

In the case before us, Mr. Aston and Mr. Chamberlain have recently discovered certain words of common origin in Korean and Japanese; and this discovery is one of the proofs that the two peoples are kin, but it does not enable us at present to say how near of kin. We only know that both belong to what is called the Altaic family.

So far as is yet known, neither of these peoples has the slightest affinity with the Chinese by blood. In the first place, as to language, Chinese in its fundamental conceptions is as far removed from Japanese or Korean as these are from English; that is, there is as yet no apparent connection whatever between the two.[1] Not only are there no root-forms in common between Chinese and Japanese or Korean, but the structure, the position of words, is radically different in the two tongues. The same is true of aboriginal manners and customs so far as we can observe them. Such observation is not so easy as it might be, for a reason which brings us to the second factor in the shaping of Korean character, — the education of the race.

The history of the development of a race has many analogies with that of the growth of a single individual, and in no feature perhaps more strikingly than in that of its intellectual life. A boy is born of a certain stock; certain blood flows in his veins, bringing with its ebb and flow certain inherited tendencies. For the first few years of his life he grows up under like influences, — those of his home. Then comes a time when he is sent to school. He is taken out of those earlier ways to be taught something beyond what hitherto had lain beside his path. For a period he is busied not so much with his own ideas as with the learning of others. He grows older and leaves school. Complete concentration in the study of what

[1] It is, however, quite possible that the connection is not so remote as would appear to be the case; but, as yet, this is only hypothesis.

comes from without is changed into an interaction of what he thinks with what he learns. He digests, assimilates, gives out.

Now, all this happens just as truly to a race. There have never been, since the very earliest times, races that have been entirely self-contained, wholly self-taught. Almost all of them have gone to school abroad. But there is a most marked difference in the result, according to where they went to school or by whom they were brought up. European nations received their education at the hands of relatives, — of cousins, and that of no very distant degree. The far-East got theirs from strangers; or, if they were in truth originally of kin, they had at least come to be regarded as alien. In consequence, the pupils remembered the facts; but they never imbibed those subtler influences which, if in the least allied to his own nature, creep into a boy's heart while his head is busy with paradigms or formulæ. They learned the letter of a civilization without feeling innately its spirit. This applies to most of the higher and later forms of Korean civilization, but it does not apply to the deeper race-characteristics; for in these, to a certain extent, teachers and taught agreed.

China was the schoolmaster at whose feet Korea the pupil sat. So vastly superior at that time was the Chinese civilization, that it is no wonder that the comparatively rude Tartar races should have been impressed — dazzled by it. They adopted it wholesale, and then tried to live up to it. This they succeeded in doing so far as outward expressions were concerned. We have seen why they found it difficult to do more. Then there was another reason. That upon this as a foundation they reared no subsequent superstructure is due, perhaps, to the character of that very foundation. If they did but little in original development, it must be remembered that China herself did not accomplish very much more. In the general

directions in which she was fertile, the Tartar peoples also were productive, and in those lines in which they did nothing she herself was barren.

The Koreans had some slight home influences before they received their foreign tuition. They were by no means barbaric, even at that early period. They had developed race-characteristics; they possessed institutions which have survived in spite of the new superimposed mass. Faintly, in places yet, traces of the old local color can be seen through the stronger tints of foreign decoration. That the aboriginal traits are not more plainly visible to-day, that the discovery and explanation at the present time of purely Tartar characteristics are such difficult matters, is due to the fact that the most important, perhaps, of the foreign acquisitions was the very power of self-perpetuation itself; for it was then that the Tartars first became acquainted with writing. Before this time they had possessed apparently no means of recording their thoughts or preserving the memory of their actions.

Now, the three principles which may be considered to be the most important parts of the groundwork of the Korean character, and equally of the Japanese, depend upon both the factors above mentioned. They were originally in the blood, and they have been strengthened by subsequent Chinese education. Both alike have been affected by a very peculiar conservatism, much stronger, however, in the Chinese than among the Tartar races. The result is, that they have from circumstances acquired a life and a strength not properly their own. They are the crude ways of thought of boyhood perpetuated into middle age. The race has the semblance of being grown up while it has kept the mind of its childhood; and thus it is a living anachronism. No wonder that its customs should appear so odd to nations whose career has been more normal. It is not, then, to the existence of any



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traits peculiar to the race that the result is due, but to the permanence, beyond what has happened elsewhere, of those characteristics common in a greater or less degree to all races at the same stage of development. It is the crystallization, as it were, into a rigid form of what should have been but a passing phase. It is a curious case of partially arrested development. The evolution of the fundamental principles was checked, while the superficial details of civilization went on growing. It will be well to outline with a few bold strokes these three principles before taking up a consideration of them more in detail.

First, then, as to their impersonality. This, of course, is the state in which all nations begin their life. Every man is made aware of external objects before he becomes conscious that it is he who sees them. But most nations pass from this objective condition at a comparatively early period into the more attractive state where the body is recognized as something better than a mere automaton. In certain ways a man or a nation reaches at last another period of impersonality; but the second state is wholly different from the one we are now considering. The Tartar peoples are still in the first state of impersonality. In this respect they have changed but little since primitive times. The trait with them is even more a question of blood than of education; for impersonal as are the Chinese, the Tartars are more so. All nations vary in the extent to which this characteristic is still retained; and the most marked results follow its absence or presence, as the case may be. We have only to turn to the history of the French and the English, for instance, to see what different political and social modes of life it can cause a nation to assume. Bureaucracy, on the one hand, and the institution of the home, on the other, are in part the results of comparative impersonality on one side of the Channel, and of personality in the island beyond it.

The second is the patriarchal system. Like the quality of impersonality, it has survived from the earliest ages. Like the other, too, it is a race-characteristic. While the people were still nomads, it was a very useful as it was a most natural institution. They wandered in bands for the sake of defence and sociability, and the head of each family was its most suitable chief. From the immediate family time itself would extend the practice to larger and larger bodies of descendants. As they settled down, they clung to the ancient custom, although the reasons which had given it birth had ceased to exist. It continued because to the power of its momentum — if we may so speak of an imponderable — there was added a new impulse. This accession to the force of the custom came to them with their foreign education from China, and was due there to a concurrence of circumstances which we shall take up later. Instead of growing lighter and more lax, the yoke of obedience became — as, under the circumstances, if it was to continue at all, it was bound to become — heavier and more binding. The duties of a son in the former state were principally out-of-doors, and from their very nature less engrossing. As the herds were exchanged for farms, his attention took on a more domestic garb. To serve indoors was a much closer tie than to owe obedience in the field. Obligations multiplied and were more compelling. The son served the father in a way he had never done before, and filial subjection was raised from the position of a necessary fact to the rank of a virtue.

Lastly, we come to the position of woman. The lower man's place in the scale of nations, the lower, relatively to his own, has always been that of woman. Woman, being physically less strong, naturally suffers where physical strength is made the basis of esteem. But as men have advanced in civilization, gradually a chivalrous regard has been paid the weaker but fairer sex. Now, though the countries of the far-East have had

their age of feudalism, in a general parallelism to those of the West, loyalty took the place of chivalry as one of its attendant feelings. At the point where woman elsewhere made her *début* upon the social stage, here she failed to appear; and she has not done so since. The history of these races has been a history of man apart from any help from woman. To all social intents and purposes, woman has remained as she was when she followed as a slave in her lord's wanderings. She is better fed now, better clothed, cleaner and more comfortable than she was; but, relatively to the position of the people, no higher. She counts for nothing in the life of the race at the present time, as she has counted for nothing in it from the beginning.

These three traits developed into institutions, which I shall take up separately and more at length presently. But I have dwelt upon them, particularly and at first, because I consider a full appreciation of them to be vital to an understanding of the thousand details of far-Eastern life and the still more interesting methods of far-Eastern thought. Really to know a people, it is not sufficient to be conversant with their actions; we must understand the motives from which those actions spring. Otherwise, however well we may remember the past, we shall never be able to predict the future.

With these principles, then, as guides, the ways and customs of Korea and Japan will become capable of explanation, and will cease to appear, as they certainly do at first to our modes of thought, a jumble of unintelligible eccentricities.

NOTE. — To prevent a possible misunderstanding, it is perhaps wise to state that what has been said of the Korean and the Japanese languages applies, of course, to pure Korean and pure Japanese. Sinico-Korean and Sinico-Japanese are simply mispronounced Chinese. The present speech of either Korea or Japan consists of a mixture, not however indiscriminate, of the two classes, roughly paralleled by, though much more distinct than, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman parts of the English language.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE QUALITY OF IMPERSONALITY.

AFTER many years of diligent study, a celebrated metaphysician was once enabled to demonstrate to his complete satisfaction that the *ego* was the *ego*, — to prove, that is, in English, that I am not you and that you are not somebody else. Most of us are perhaps rather prone to act upon this principle without quite so much previous application. But we are of the West, Western. It is to the far-East that we must look if we would realize at once the importance and the insignificance of the idea of self. There the matter is shorn of its trappings of inborn affection and respect; it is reduced to its lowest possible terms, and then these terms are omitted as of little or no account in the conduct of the race. The *ego* might there as well be the *alter ego* as itself, for all the treatment it receives. In short, personality, that great central fact of consciousness, would seem at times, to the Western student, to be nothing more substantial than a chimera of his own brain.

At the threshold of your acquaintance with any far-Eastern people, you are made aware of a something more than usually separative in the barrier between you and them. Like all such instincts, you could hardly formulate it, still less prove it; but you feel it. As you get to know them better and look for it to crumble away, instead of a disappearance you find that you have only approached nearer to a wall that bars your progress. And the feeling is somehow different from any such

feelings you have had before. As you ponder on it, at last it dawns upon you what it is that separates you. It is not simply a matter of two differing personalities; it is a question of an absence of personality in them altogether.

As soon as you attack the language, the suspicion becomes a certainty. It struck you in the conduct of the coolie who waylaid your arrival; you learn it in the initial sentence of the speech you succeed in mastering. The man did not seem to be conscious of his own identity. The race does not realize itself; while to the student, Nirvana, or the absorption of the individual soul into the soul of the universe, seems to have descended from its abstract sphere of speculation, and become an every-day fact. Mirroring, as the speech of a people must mirror, the character of that people, let us glance a moment at the quality as it shows itself in the tongue.

Conceive, then, a language devoid of gender, number, and person, — one which takes into account neither sex nor plural nor individual. Here is a speech which at the outset utterly disregards what seem to be the fundamental principles in our own processes of thought. It denies, by ignoring it, that question which not only has perplexed metaphysicians for centuries, but which is tacitly assumed as innately proven and acted upon by the world at large, — the conscious yet controverted distinction between man's mind and the universe beside. What is mind? What is matter? are problems which the far-Oriental solves by regarding himself and others in the light in which he would regard a house, — namely, simply as a material fact.

Let us examine the three distinctions, — person, number, and sex, — in order clearly to recognize the force of such omissions; and let us begin with that of person, for it is the one perhaps that most strikingly exemplifies the quality we are describing.

Except by later invented circumlocutions, there is no way of discriminating between the three persons. To the original Tartar mind, "I," "you," and "he" were not distinctions recognized as founded in Nature, and therefore needed not to be expressed in speech. Later, when a more complex form of society introduced relative conceptions in addition to absolute ones, personifications like "that side," "that honorable corner," and the like, were improvised to do the duty of pronouns. But even these are used as sparingly as possible; and it is one of the commonest mistakes made by the European beginner in Japanese to intersperse, as the Japanese deem it, his conversation with unnecessary personal references. They are never employed when not absolutely indispensable to make the sense clear, or for the sake of emphasis. And it is really surprising to us to notice, under these conditions, how superfluous they are nine times out of ten. It is usually quite evident from the rest of the sentence who is the actor or the acted upon that may happen to be meant.[1]

Now, in itself, there is nothing anomalous about this. It is the way in which every child begins to express himself. The peculiarity enters when we consider that it should have been preserved. It is now grown-up baby-talk, as it were. The man continues to look upon himself as an observer when time has pushed him on to take his part in the action of life. An impersonal race is never truly grown up.

Consider next the distinction of sex. In dealing with living beings this differentiation, we should think, must certainly be necessary. In them sex exists, and therefore must be recognized. Woman, girl, grandmother, mother-in-law, are pleasing or disagreeable facts. For such we assuredly must have particular names; and they have them, too, — that is, words to

[1] This is most strikingly exemplified in Japanese; but a kindred construction is observable in Korean.

denote the objects themselves. But this does not in the least involve the matter of sex in grammar. A girl is a girl, and a stone is a stone, and both are things or facts; and there the matter ends. When we refer to such objects, "it" or "thing" is really as good a word for the purpose as "she." The idea of using them is only shocking to our inherited prejudices. Our fundamental conceptions about the matter, in the way of grammar, are shaken; but there is no natural propriety that is violated.

But are these conceptions in reality so fundamental? Are they even so necessary as we commonly suppose? After a short study of Japanese or Korean, it seems to me we shall think not. In our own language, having passed through the period of inflection, we are coming back again in many ways to former simplicity. We have learned what can, without loss of precision, be discarded, and what not; and there seems to be no reason why we should not take a few more steps in the same direction. Our ideas of the things themselves will never coincide with far-Eastern materialism; but we need not, for all that, carry into speech distinctions which there only become useless. Witness, for illustration, the comparative simplicity of English as against German.

Next comes the brute creation. Now, it is sometimes useful to be able to specify a cow, for instance, from a bull, but not always. There are many occasions in which either is equally to the purpose. In this particular instance such occasions are more numerous in the far-East than elsewhere, as there the cow is never called upon for her distinguishing characteristic, — milk. Again, either a horse or a mare will do to carry a burden, so that all that need be called for is a horse (genus). Whenever special stress is laid upon the question of sex, particles denoting male or female are prefixed.

As to merely fanciful discriminations, they are evidently

more poetic than indispensable. The gender of an umbrella or the sex of a shadow can hardly be vital. That *la pluie* should be feminine and *le beau temps* masculine, is rather a surprising want of gallantry to the fair sex, from so generally gallant a nation, than suggestive of any occult principle in Nature, despite the fact that in the Chinese philosophy sunshine is correlated to the male essence, shade to the female.

Number — that is, the want of a plural, and the consequent necessity of employing what are called "anxiliary numerals" — leads us into the most interesting philosophical speculations. But as it does not bear particularly upon impersonality, I omit it here. Suffice it to say, that such an expression as "three coolies" is impossible. "Coolie three man" would be the somewhat circuitous path necessary to reach the idea.

Here, then, subjectivity vanishes. The whole cosmos — man himself included — is reduced to its objective existence. It is the boldest expression of materialism the world has ever seen. It does more than posit a theory on the subject; it assumes such a theory to be a fact.

Other details of the language bear the same impersonal stamp. The order of words in a sentence is inverted, as we regard it. This is in order that the nouns may come as early as possible, the connecting particles being considered less important, and the verb still less so. But nouns denote natural facts, while verbs express action; and action, as immediately recognized by man in the every-day life around him, is mostly human. Here, again, a prominence is given to Nature, and man's doings are as much as possible ignored.

Thus examples might be heaped upon examples, all proving a materialized, though in no sense a deep generalized, conception of things. It is no return in manhood to abstract speculation upon what may be the essence of things. It is the most unpondered concrete assumption, — man's first idea

of things around him of which he himself is a part, before he has realized the later consciousness of self.

Having seen how the quality finds expression in forms of thought, let us glance at it as, unconsciously perhaps, it is expressed in action. The traveller will not have to wait long for an example. It will meet him when he first sets foot in Japan. As soon as he has passed safely through the ordeal of the custom-house, — which has been among the first importations of Western ways, — he will need something in which to carry himself and his traps away. He has been told that a jinrikisha, or large baby-carriage, drawn by a man, is the vehicle in common use, and, seeing some standing idly in the distance, he calls one of them; for, in addition to those kurumaya[1] who court fate by trundling the thing slowly up and down the highway, there are regular stands, appointed by law, where the vehicles may be seen in rows awaiting customers. To his call a score respond, hurrying towards him so quickly as to suggest nothing so much as a rush of autumn leaves started by a sudden gust of wind from the quiet corner where they lay. In a twinkling they are all about him, and the shafts have fallen at his feet as if indeed they were but leaves, and had come once more to rest upon the ground as suddenly as they had left it. As he is only one, and his baggage, after all, is limited, he cannot use them all. So he prepares to make a choice. He turns his attention for an instant to his traps, to judge what he shall need, and on turning back again, behold, the men have all vanished, and he finds himself

[1] The word "kuruma" (literally, "a wheel") is the pure Japanese expression for the Sinico-Japanese name "jinrikisha." The word "ya" meant originally "a house," and then came to be affixed to various articles or pursuits; as we might say book-house, clothes-house, etc. From denoting the place of business the name was extended to denote the business itself, till finally it was actually applied to the man who carried on the trade. This very word, therefore, most ludicrously typifies the impersonality of the race; for a fixed place, "wheel-shop," now denotes a man whose sole business consists in constantly travelling.

the centre of a mute but expectant-looking circle of baby-carriages, their shafts all pointed towards him and bowed to the earth as if in an attitude of importunate entreaty. He wonders what can so suddenly have happened to the men, until, on searching for them, his eyes at last light upon them in a group in a corner of the square. It speaks but meanly of human nature, or rather of what experience on his side of our planet has taught him to be only too true, that at first he supposes them to be wrangling over his capture. But on patiently watching them, as if he were the most disinterested of spectators, — for he is well aware how useless interposition is in such cases, — he becomes conscious that it is no quarrel, but a settlement that is going on. The coolies are actually drawing lots for the privilege of the opportunity. One man in the centre holds the strings, and the others select each his ribbon, and then abide in the best possible humor by the result. Imagine for a moment such a method resorted to by our cabmen to settle a difficulty!

Now, that such action springs partly from good nature and innate delicacy or refinement of character is doubtless true; but more important than this is the underlying principle of impersonality. Each man has not yet fully realized the division of the world into self and not-self. He recognizes intuitively an equal right, or something approaching it, in his fellows to what he possesses himself, so that the drawing of lots to settle matters strikes him not only as having the keeping of the peace to recommend it, but as being peculiarly the rational thing to do.

We see the same quality, a motive cause alike in their business and in their pleasures. It shows itself in the want of both combination and competition in the one, and it betrays itself in what they consider to constitute the essence of the other.

We are prone to think, and most naturally, of the East as of a swarming mass of humanity, — a mass devoid of individuality. We always think of that of which we have not personal cognizance as devoid to a certain extent of individuality; but we imagine it particularly of the far-East. In one sense we are right. Both education and thought are more on a level than with us. The hills and valleys of intellect are less far apart. But in another sense we are quite wrong. This mass, as we take it to be, is distinctly and peculiarly a collection of units. Like round units, they are, who, for the amount they contain, expose the least surface to contact with their fellows. They roll through the world easily, lazily to themselves, and they touch others but little in their journey. Charity, we are told, begins at home. Equally true is it that the quality we so truly and prettily call "humanity" — as if, indeed, it were the essence of man — begins in his own being before it extends abroad; for it has its springs in selfishness, — that is, in the thinking of self. A man must realize himself and his own feelings before he can sympathize with others; and thus, paradoxical as it may seem at first, personality, or the differentiation of one's own from other individualities, lies at the bottom of that combining together which constitutes society. The far-East is impersonal, and that very impersonality separates one man from his neighbor. Each lives by himself in a way unknown among us.

The effect shows itself very markedly in the matter of business. In spite of the great skill which Korean artisans of the past and Japanese artisans of to-day have attained in their various manufactures, these manufactures are still carried on after the most primitive fashion. Each man works for himself, and works himself. He may chance to be the most renowned man in the profession, and yet his shop is hardly larger or better than that of his neighbor who is just starting on his career.

Co-operation, except as introduced into Japan by Western ideas, is unknown; large establishments, under one or more heads, are equally unknown. This is really conducive to better work; so is the fact that father transmits his business to son, and that sometimes for many generations the same pursuit is the distinctive mark of a particular family.

Yet such isolation is in no sense the outcome of self-consideration, nor intended for self-advancement. Antithetically, competition is as non-existent as co-operation. The man is not thinking of excelling his neighbors; he does not seclude himself in order the better to distance them. He does not consider them in the least. He works alone, because such is the natural way. The motive cause is not selfishness; it is just the opposite, the very absence of all thought of self. We see how deep-rooted in his nature and how strong the quality is, that even trade has so little influence to alter it.

In Korea, indifference on account of this quality is still further increased by the action of the Government. The desire on the part of the officials to make money prevents the merchants from making any, and naturally takes away what little incentive to work might still remain. The getting of office is not dependent upon successful business, but business depends upon the successful getting of an office. The merchants have the outward appearance of engaging in trade, but it is the officials who really do business. But with them there is, in like manner, no competition, as their operations are limited each to the field of his own magistracy.

One result is that, in Korea, there is no such thing as a price. Each man has his own price, as he has his own shop. Price also varies from day to day, not from change in value, but from change in caprice. This, however, is not so surprising as is the general unwillingness to part with their goods, except in the smallest possible quantities. Instead of hailing

the opportunity to get rid of large amounts by a reduction in price, there is not only no such thing as a reduction in price dreamt of, but the dealer will not consent to the sale on any terms. His argument is that if he were to dispose of so much of his stock, he would be obliged to buy more, and the price would go up, which eventuality seems to him for some inexplicable reason a consummation most devoutly to be shunned. If, then, in buying, say, half a pound of tobacco, you hint that you will in all probability shortly want fifty pounds more, far from producing a favorable impression, as you intended, you will have made of yourself an object of suspicion and fear. This is what takes place in the necessaries of life. If, instead of these, you coveted certain luxuries, such as old curios, you would encounter much more difficulty. It is true that the articles lie patent to all, in shops that have no glass to shut them off from the passers-by, and may be touched and handled without hindrance or objection. But to attempt to buy them is a different matter. If you are bold enough to suggest such a thing, the proprietor treats you much as if you were some ruthless brigand who would deprive him of his little all. He names, in a forced sort of way, what he hopefully believes will be a prohibitory price, and then is horribly dismayed if it or anything in its neighborhood is accepted. If at last he does consent to part with the coveted object, he does so under a tacit protest that makes you feel as if you had seized the pet lamb or some reverenced family heirloom. You certainly have permanently altered the look of the place, and the gap will mutely reproach you as you pass his shop in your after walks. For purchasers of your temerity are so rare that for months together the same articles are to be seen day after day in their prescriptive corners of the same shops; and trade with these men is equivalent to a revolution in the established order of things, as objects exposed for sale get to be well-recognized

landmarks by which the comparative stranger learns to tell his whereabouts.

The same principle that thus underlies and saps all business modifies, though differently, his pursuit of pleasure. The Korean does not, it is true, always seek his pleasure alone. He finds it commonly in gatherings with other men, — all-day dinners or excursions in Korea, which the evil communication of Western ideas has corrupted into night entertainments in Japan. But though he seeks his pleasure in company with others, the company of others is not the pleasure he seeks. When he can, he goes on a garden or landscape party, in which the country plays the part, not of occasion, but of cause. Only when he must, for the state of the weather, dine without scenery, does he do so. The results in the two cases seem to be alike, but the motive causes and the adjuncts have in reality changed places. His off moments are given to his associates, but his soul is with Nature.

Lastly, in the matter of the affections, we see the same thing. So far as such a thing can be true at all, the far-Oriental might be said to be possessed by impersonal affection. The statement is almost a contradiction in terms, but not quite. For instance, his love is hardly worthy the name. Of all the higher mental and moral aspects of the feeling, he knows nothing. On the other hand, his filial affection, in which he seems at first far to surpass European nations, is largely a question of rigid etiquette.

Thus, then, the subject of impersonality is linked on the one hand with the position of woman, and on the other with the patriarchal system. To follow, therefore, the chain of our argument, we shall have next to glance for a moment at the ancient patriarchal system and its outcome to-day.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM.

THE second of the triad — second in place, because second in importance — is the patriarchal system.

Probably all nations, during their earlier stages of development to a position worthy the name, have lived under some form of patriarchal government. Such rule was equally true of each as a whole, and of its smallest divisible parts, — the families of which it was composed. Either in fiction or in fact, father and ruler were synonymous terms. But most nations also outgrew the system as they advanced in civilization. The nations of the far-East are peculiar, not in having had the custom, but in having continued it after they had arrived at what for a people are years of distinction.

To this result two causes were instrumental, — the general character of the people and the advent of Confucius. Both China and the Tartar peoples, Korea and Japan, have from the dawn of history evinced a most remarkable inclination and ability to stand still. It can hardly with propriety be called conservatism, especially in the case of the Tartar races, because while these races have showed a great attachment to their own things, they have always displayed an equal fondness for the things of others. They have invariably been as eager to borrow as tenacious to retain. The rapidity to adopt foreign ideas wholesale, which astounds us in Japan to-day, is no new trait. The Japanese did precisely

the same with China and its civilization a thousand years ago; and Korea in some ways even more markedly has pursued a like course.

What this betokens in mind-constitution it is beside the subject to inquire here. We have now only to do with it as a fact.

The other cause was the existence of Confucius. This great man, though in no sense the founder of a religion, had an influence upon his times and upon succeeding ages as potent as if he had been such. He may, therefore, fittingly be compared with those who have created a faith.

On considering the matter, we shall find that the men whose teachings succeeding generations have agreed to worship — such as Buddha, Zoroaster, Mahomet — all lived at a time when the nations that gave them birth were in a certain transition stage of their life. (An apparent exception is to be found in Christ; but apart from the belief that in other respects he differed from the rest, it is to be noted that his influence was not upon the Jews nor yet upon the Greeks, but principally upon the Romans, who were not much given to speculation, and upon the northern hordes, who were just starting on their career.) These religious thinkers were thus worshipped for their very opportuneness. Their own greatness was of course the cause, but the occasion was the favorableness of the time. Such devoted adherence to any one man's words would probably be impossible now. They marked the stage when the nation, to which they belonged, awoke to emotional thought, when it began seriously to crave for a hereafter for each man's personality, and what seemed linked to these wishes, the idea of an abstract good. They formulated these wishes, and were believed. At a corresponding age in Chinese history lived the great Chinese sage; and though he preached not a religion, he was reverenced as if he had.

The teachings of Confucius, then, became law, — a moral law which has remained as fixed from the time it was promulgated as all else Chinese, — a fixity to which the laws of the Medes and Persians were as ephemeral as the hastily successive constitutions of French governments seem to the rest of mankind to-day. Now, Confucius lived at a time when the continuation or development of what had been the patriarchal system was still in full vigor, and it is not surprising that he should have given his attention rather to the improving of what he found already in existence than to the inventing of a new scheme for society. He did not start the custom, to be sure; but finding it in motion, he gave it an impulse which has helped to send it down through so many centuries. But it is most unfortunate that he did so; for, stamped with his sanction, it has had a life not properly its own. Its existence has been artificially, because arbitrarily, prolonged, and it has long since outlived its usefulness.

Instead of outgrowing, therefore, an undue reverence for age, — a reverence which was at least more natural when the age of the father bore a somewhat greater ratio to the age of the son (both being reckoned, as by heredity they should be, from the birth of mankind) than was true as the centuries rolled on, — the peoples of the Asiatic eastern coast perpetuated and crystallized a changing phase into a permanent condition. Tied not to their mother's apron-strings, indeed, but as securely to their father's will, they have suffered from the practice as surely as a boy does.

It is not, indeed, with a rude primeval patriarchal system that we have here to do. The lapse of time has, to a certain extent, changed the external features of the custom. This was inevitable as society passed into a more and more civilized condition. But as the reason for it became virtually less, it became virtuously greater. It passed from the sphere of necessity to that

of morals. To say, therefore, that the father of a family is, till the time of his death, a law to his descendants, is to express but one half of the fact, and the least potent half at that. An intense filial piety on the part of the son must be taken into account to give a true idea of the power of the custom.' This filial piety is the one great moral principle of the far-East. All others exist, as it were, in abeyance. Truth is unknown, honesty largely out of practice, and chastity a luxury wherever it is a fact. Most of these principles are preached, and the good in books are held up to reverence as observing them; but for every-day life they have lapsed by desuetude.

After a peculiarly aggravating instance of Japanese household cheating, I was, one afternoon, in Tokio, discussing this subject with a friend who had opportunely dropped in. He had lived for years in Japan, and had studied Korean, — one of the three men at that time who had. "I will give you," said he, "a preface to the state of things. It happened to me, but it might as well have happened to you. For art's sake the person is immaterial. The very first word I learned in Korean was the word 'suspicion.'"

Around the father there gathers almost a religious veneration; for to a Korean there is nothing, from ministering to his thousand daily wants to sharing his exile, which a son is not compelled by his own right feeling to do for his father, and the more he makes of himself a slave the more is he by others esteemed a master. In books of moral tales for the young or old, the greater number of stories turn upon examples of self-sacrifice of this kind. In our social system we commonly receive first kindness and care from the generation before, and then transmit it to the one to come. In theirs, a man pays it first, and then looks to his own children for repayment of the debt.

The far-Eastern peoples believe in a future life and also in a personal immortality. In Buddhism this at last fades away

into Nirvana; but in the aboriginal belief, so far as it is formulated at all, personality is supposed to last forever. Granted such a belief, it is but a step from the reverence paid to one's ancestors during life, to continue that reverence to their memories after death. The worship of ancestors, so called, follows then directly from the patriarchal system; and its observances are logically in keeping with the idea. To call it a worship, however, is misleading. It is simply a form of showing respect. Worship, in the sense in which it can be shown to another human being, is paid to their spirits, as is befitting those who were held so high in estimation during their life on earth. Food is placed before their shrines, but only to show the watchful care of those who loved them when alive. That they can materially need or make use of it is held only by the lower classes, who, in matters of superstition, will swallow anything themselves, and credit others with a like capacity. Prayers are made to them; but what are prayers but the inward communing with such as are far from us, and beyond the reach of spoken words or written thoughts? Stated times are set apart for these observances; but do we not the like, when on the first day of the new year we call ceremoniously upon our friends?

The worship of ancestors is, properly speaking, only a communion with the dead. It is in no sense a religion, nor a part of one. The dead are not deified; they are regarded as beings of the same order still that they were known to be on earth. As depending upon the belief in a personal immortality, the rite suggests at first the supposition that it must be religious itself. But though it follows from an intrinsically religious idea, the idea is not, as it were, an intrinsic part of the rite, although absolutely necessary to its existence.

From these observances depends a singular custom, — one which at first seems to us a reversal of the natural order of

things, — the ennobling of a man's ancestors to the rank conferred on him, instead of so treating his descendants. And yet, of the two methods, it is the more strictly logical. That a man's descendants shall inherit his great qualities is at least doubtful; that all his male descendants shall do so, is practically impossible; and that the eldest son of the eldest son *ad perpetuum* shall invariably do so, while all the rest do not, is simply preposterous. On the other side, from what we now know of the principle of heredity, we can safely affirm that among his ancestors, and probably along a tolerably well-sustained line of descent, there must have been a part, at least, of the talent which the man himself displayed. Somewhere it existed, though it might be hard to fix the spot. For fear, therefore, of missing the deserving, all are honored alike.

On this subject there occurs, in a certain book called, as we might paraphrase it, "Illustrated Moral Tales of the Great and Good," the story of a dream. It was a dream which was not all a dream, not only because it all came true, but because it was written down, and so has lived for years in the memories of successive generations of readers.

There was once in Korea a certain man by the name of Pok. In a certain year of the period Kong Sin, he came to be promoted to the literary fellowship called "the improved gentleman." About a month before he was thus honored, he dreamed one night a very peculiar dream. Suddenly he seemed to see standing in the middle of the room three human figures. The stature of one of them was of the size of life. He recognized it as his father's. The second of the three was that of an unknown man, whose size was half that of a human being. The third was also unknown to him, and of a very small stature. As he sat bolt upright, staring at them, the three figures spoke, and with one accord said to him: "Before long you will be promoted, and become

'an improved gentleman.' We had much toil and trouble even in attempting to attain this rank. We could not compass our end. You, in our stead, will win the honor and fame we so long strove for. You also should try hard to do good, and thus leave to your descendants the reaping of the harvest of your good actions." Then Pok, amazed, asked of his father, "Who are these two figures?" And his father replied, "That figure with half the stature of common men is your grandfather. That other, of a still more diminutive appearance, is your great-grandfather." All three then vanished. This was what Pok told to others when he awoke from his peculiar dream.

The importance of apparitions, as we see, is measured by their bulk. The race has long since gotten over the estimating of the size of minds by the comparative size of bodies, but the sarcasm of dreamland has preserved it in that world whose denizens are purely immaterial. The family had been gradually increasing in worth. As the increase of ability was apparently one half at a generation, it is open to those who advocate the theory that great men inherit their qualities solely from the female side, to believe that instead of being the result of continued application on the part of the sons, as the tale would have us suppose, the intellect came in with the successive mothers.

But it is rather the concrete of the principle than the abstract that is potent with the far-Eastern mind. Once every year a man must journey to the tombs of his ancestors, there to perform certain rites. To this visit attaches the pomp inseparable from the rank of the pilgrim. Now, it would be out of all keeping that a man of high rank should take a long and laborious journey in order to do honor to those of meaner position. They must therefore be of the same position as the man who comes to visit them, and

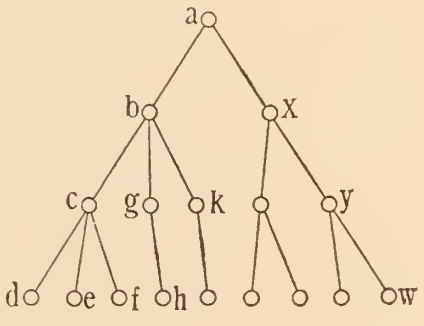
consequently they are ennobled at once to his own station. A man must not look down upon those, when dead, whom he has looked up to when they were alive.

The honoring of ancestors is the most important outgrowth of the patriarchal system. The next in importance is the question of property and its distribution. As we should suppose from the general principle, the ownership is vested absolutely in the father. During his life no son can really call his soul — still less such dross as property — his own. The son lives by himself with his own family, cultivates his farm, and lives from out the proceeds. Apparently he owns it; but in truth it is all his father's, both land and chattels. His father can sell it over his head if he feels so inclined. Of course, the paternal position has duties coextensive with its powers; and a father is always bound to support his child, whether that child be four years of age or forty.

At the father's death the eldest son becomes the head of the family. But here the two powers cease to be one; the headship of the clan and the ownership of all the property become separated. If the father dies intestate, the eldest son divides the property among himself and his brothers at his pleasure. If the father leaves a will, it must be of a specified form, by which two-thirds of the estate go to the eldest son, and the other third is divided among the other sons. The daughters inherit nothing. In fact, if married, — the usual case, — they have ceased to belong to the family at all. The large proportion left in this manner to the eldest son is to some extent accounted for by his obligation to support his mother and impecunious brothers. These laws exhibit a curious inversion of our principles; a will is not optional, and the distribution of the property of an intestate is.

There is, however, a sort of lien upon all this property. The head of the family is the ancestral representative. To his

charge are committed the expenditures for the deceased. For this purpose, and for this purpose only, he has unlimited power over all the property. He may call upon any member to furnish him with what he deems necessary, and may sell his relatives' property, real or personal, for this end. Such occurrence is, however, not common, as his means, due to the lion's share he inherits, are ample for the purpose. On the death of the eldest son, his eldest son becomes the head of the family. If he should not yet be grown up, the oldest uncle acts in his stead during his minority. And so the post descends, the eldest of the eldest being always the head of the clan. The annexed table will make this clear: *d*, for instance, is head of the clan, *a*, *b*, and *c* being supposed dead. Now, in ancestral matters touching *c* alone, only *e* and *f* are affected, and owe him obedience. In matters connected with *b*, *h* would also be included.



So would *g* and *k*, although of an older generation, because *d* represents the common ancestor. While if the rites had to do with *a*, all the rest as far as *x*, *y*, and *w* would be subject to his command.

Dependent upon the clan relationship is the subject of names. Commonly, a Korean has three names, — for instance, Yu Kil Chun. The first name, Yu, is the family name, — the name that he shares in common with all the other members of the same clan. Next in generality, comes what we may call his degree of relationship from the common ancestor name. This is a peculiar and exceedingly convenient appellative. Every kinsman the same degree removed from the common ancestor

is given for one of his three names the same cognomen, and each degree has a different cognomen from all the other degrees. Let me make clear what I mean by an example. Suppose Yu again the common ancestor. All his sons would have, let us say, Jin as the degree name. One would be Yu Sok Jin, another Yu Ik Jin, and the third Yu Yong Jin. Their children, again, would all be Chun, as Yu Kil Chun, Yu Sok Chun, Yu Mok Chun, etc. Thus, though Yu Sok Chun and Yu Ik Chun were so far apart that they had never seen each other, still on meeting for the first time they would at once be able to recognize the degree each was removed from their common ancestor, — to what generation each belonged. This is not only useful in ordinary life, but it becomes an easy criterion of legality in questions of adoption, as we shall see presently. This degree name is decided upon by the head of the family. He announces his choice, and all his relatives must conform in the naming of their children. Its place among the three names is not fixed. It may either come in the middle or last. But this is really no bar to its discrimination, as every man knows himself which it is, in his own or other generations, and can therefore easily pick it out from among the various names of his relatives. The remaining name of the three is each man's individual name.

I said that commonly a Korean has three names. Sometimes he has but two. In this case his given name, which stands last, his clan name always standing first, is spelled with two Chinese characters, although pronounced as one word, and the first of the two is the degree character, so that even in this case writing would give the clew, though speaking would not.

So closely related to the above is the matter of adoption, that it seems fitting to speak of it here. It is an exceedingly common practice both in Korea and Japan. In the latter place, indeed, it is frequently a matter of no small inconvenience to foreigners

who have to do with young men, — as, for instance, the foreign professors at the University of Tokio. In an average class, once every fortnight or so, somebody comes up to announce his change of name; and not content with one such change, the same man will often change and change about till memory refuses to follow the endless complications. The instructor starts with one set of students; and before the year is out the class has apparently changed, to the extent of half of its members, into other personalities. Whether a man is eligible to adoption, by whoever it may be, I do not know; but certain it is that he can be, and frequently is, adopted by his maternal relatives, which is sufficient to produce a complete alteration in both his names, surname as well as given name. (Our term "Christian name" is of course unmeaning here, and "Buddhist name" is not in accordance with the mode of investiture.)

In Korea, matters are not so confusing. A man can be adopted only by his paternal relatives, and only by a certain number of them. I do not mean simultaneously, of course, but consecutively. To a Korean the name seems a great part of the personality; and indeed most of us too, men especially, if pushed, would confess to a lurking quasi-belief in the same idea. However he may be adopted, therefore, a Korean never changes his name. And this is only possible, of course, under the first of the given conditions. The second condition is for the purpose of conforming as nearly as possible to the process of nature, — namely, that the elder should adopt the younger. This would be likely to arrange itself in the actual matter of years; but complications might arise as regards the family standing of elder and younger in the matter of ancestral duties, as of a distant cousin who was of a generation younger than the man he was desirous of adopting. If, therefore, promiscuous adoption were permitted, it

would soon throw into inextricable confusion the matter of comparative relationship to the common ancestor. To guard against such a catastrophe, the degree names come in most usefully. A man can adopt only those whose degree name is at least one degree lower than his own. By this means the same step is taken down the line as would be the case had the adopted been born a son, instead of being so constituted by law.

To enumerate all the various duties of a son to a father would be as tedious as it would be difficult. All that the utmost filial affection can suggest, it lies within his province to do. To obey his father in everything from the pettiest minutiæ to matters of the gravest concern, is but a tithe of what is expected of him. He should anticipate as well as accomplish the paternal desires. To suppose that such affection always, or even commonly, exists would be to contradict what we know of human nature. That the outward expression is there, is certainly the case. As for the spirit, it is like all ideals which we believe in and to which in our better moments we attempt to conform our lives.

CHAPTER XV.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN.

WE now come to the last of the triad, — the position of woman in the social economy. More properly, we may speak of it as her want of position; for the principle is, in Korea, hardly more than a negation, and, like negations generally, has been most influential, not in what it denies, but in what the absence of it has permitted to take its place. Indeed, beyond analogous cases, the influence so exerted has been indirect in its effect. In other words, the withdrawal of the influence of woman from the social system has not had the destructive effect upon that system which might have been anticipated for it; for in Korea woman practically does not exist. Materially, physically, she is a fact; but mentally, morally, socially, she is a cipher.

It has been suggested, and by some even maintained, that were woman to cease to exist — her physical place in reproduction being taken by a principle of self-perpetuation — mankind would speedily descend through a stage of lawlessness back to barbaric brutality. With us such a problem is purely imaginary; for since we left our primitive condition of savagery, no such state of things under large, general, and in other respects normal, conditions has ever been tried. Isolated communities have, it is true, lived quite apart from woman, but under circumstances differing, in other ways than simply by her absence, from the normal. Where a lapse has occurred,

there have always been, in addition to this, influences at work sufficient of themselves to produce a state of barbarity.

Now, in the far-East the experiment has been tried, though, it is perhaps unnecessary to add, hardly with that intent. There could scarcely be anything more in contrast to such a thing than the taken-for-granted immutability of a far-Eastern custom. For decades of centuries social life has ebbed and flowed under precisely such a, to us imaginary, state of things; and the result is not in the least what might have been predicted. Instead of being rougher than his fellows on the other side of the world, man is there distinctly less rough and brutal, not only in his actions but in his thoughts, yet without losing a tittle of his pluck or his determination. Indeed, it may well be asked whether woman, on the whole, is a factor to an increase of gentleness of a race; whether her presence as a prize is not such as largely to offset, by inducing rivalry and animosity among men, what she engenders of tenderness toward herself. That she has a gradual effect toward an ennobling of the character of those to whom she is a cause of inspiration, and so of the race, is another matter.

One of the most interesting points in the study of the far-East are these instances of the every-day practice of, to us, seemingly visionary social conditions.

Man, then, in certain respects, has not suffered from a want of woman's help; and yet, for all the influence she has had upon his character, feelings, thoughts, she might as well not have been. When you have said that she is the mother of his children from necessity rather than from choice, you have said all that there is of positive on the subject to be said. But this gives only a silhouette instead of a picture. The outlines, indeed, are there, and one who knows the person beforehand perceives the resemblance; but it conveys very little to a stranger.

This is her history: From her birth to her seventh year she enjoys her freedom, untrammelled by those restrictions with which society will later entomb her alive. She runs wild as any other creature during this heyday of her extreme youth. Her ignorance of her sex is her excuse, for she is born to the misfortune of growing up a girl. At seven years of age she is shut up, — a seclusion to last her life. At this age boys and girls are separated, never in a general manner to meet again. Whether she calls up in after life the happy moments of these fleeting years may well be doubted, considering the tender age at which they are closed to her forever. To the boy belongs henceforward the world; to the girl only the narrow limits of the women's apartments, — a sort of secular cloister from which the only exit is by the veil of matrimony to the *régime* of another household, in every, its minutest, particular, save for the strange faces of strange women, like the one she has left behind.

While she lives in her father's house, no man save her father or her brothers may look upon her; after she has migrated to her husband's, only he and her father-in-law ever see her. Even to those who knew her before, she is now utterly lost, for she has passed from one family bodily into another. She has ceased to belong to the first and become a part of the second, and her position in this second household is precisely as if she had been born in it. Only in the brief moment of the marriage ceremony, in which she steps from one realm into the other, — neither of them hers, — is she ever, during the whole course of her life, visible to mankind. Yet even then she plays the part of a puppet.

Marriage, in Korea, is a very important rite. It is, as we have seen, the making of the man; and in another very different way it is the only great step in a woman's life. It is, indeed, no step upward for her: she rises not a whit by the

move; but it is what is really quite as material, a complete change of environment. "My people shall be thy people," is with her no beautiful expression of self-abandonment to another, but a statement of a stern prosaic necessity. The subject turns, not upon the fancies of lovers, but upon the facts of life.

The marriage system is based upon two social principles: the one is the absolute power of a father over his offspring, and the other the existence of a species of brokerage as a means to the accomplishment of the transaction. There exist a class of men whose sole business in life consists in being matrimonial go-betweens, or marriage-brokers. To them is intrusted the whole management of the affair, much as in other countries a man would act in the hiring of a house, only that here the affair is even more blindly committed to them. In the hiring of a house a man would ordinarily go to see the house he had offered him, whereas here no such preliminary inspection is permitted. The whole matter is performed by letter, and the leap taken at last very much in the dark. Even this correspondence is carried on, not by the man who is, after all, most interested in the result, but by his father. The opportunities offered the middle men of plying their business lucratively at the expense of deceiving both parties are numberless, and it would be more than human nature did they not occasionally yield to the temptation. The way in which a father who has a marriageable girl or boy he is anxious to settle in life, goes to work to accomplish his object is this: He seeks out some marriage-broker, and states his case, — what he has to offer, and what he expects in return. The broker then looks up some other man who has one of the opposite sex on his hands, and makes overtures to him. Letters on the subject then pass through the broker between the parties. Then, in case of agreement on terms, the marriage contract is drawn up

and respectively signed. The geomancer is next consulted, and a suitable day selected for the ceremony. The age of the groom is added to the age of the bride, and the star that rules the destiny of the two in one is the star whose day is chosen for the beginning of the new life. This is the universal custom; and but few dare omit it, lest misfortune of one kind or another overtake the couple so inauspiciously joined.

On the day so appointed, the bridegroom and his family repair to the home of the bride's father, commonly on horseback. There, in the principal room of the house, a large feast stands prepared, which is the only unproblematical bit of happiness in the whole matter. The important question is shrouded in doubt. To a man not inured by the hereditary stolidity of ages, the moment must be one of most unpleasant uncertainty, somewhat like the excitement with which a gambler, whose all is staked upon the turn, watches the dancing of the roulette ball. For the bride enters veiled, and so she remains through the whole of the ceremony. This consists of certain formulæ repeated by each in turn, during the mumbling of which the couple bow thrice to each other. Then the bride lifts her veil, and the groom for the first time gazes upon the face of her to whom he is now irrevocably united. Lucky he is, indeed, if the vision pleases him. The principal performers then vanish from the scene, and the real enjoyment begins. The parents — who, because they stand at a safe distance from the consequences of the act, are of course immensely pleased — fall to and refresh themselves, indulging meanwhile in a highly commendable outburst of feeling toward their newly acquired friends of the last quarter of an hour. The banquet disappears in clouds of smoke; and after several hours of prolonged festivity, the families separate, more affectionately united than one would suppose could ordinarily fall to the lot of the couple more immediately concerned.

The will of the two fathers is law. No properly brought up son would so much as dream of disobeying; and as for a daughter, she is not consulted in the matter at all. So much for what is usually considered to be the most important act in a woman's life. Thenceforward she is simply the mother of children. Her husband has absolute power over her, except that he may not take her life, or otherwise too brutally maltreat her. She lives in her own suite of rooms, and only goes abroad heavily veiled, or in a closed palanquin, to visit her female friends. Not only no man save her husband sees her, but even to him she forms no part of his life. A man may be another's intimate friend for a lifetime, and yet he would never know what his friend's wife looked like, nor even that he had one, save for the social standing such a relation confers upon the man himself.

To our ideas, a Korean marriage is a very odd thing, — not the ceremony, which is simply *sui generis*, but the fact. A Korean marries, not because he is in love, nor because he wishes for descendants, nor yet to gain money or to make an advantageous alliance, but simply and solely to be married, — abstractly as it were. To him it is the realization of no particular fancy, but the accomplishment of a general good, — a step upward in the social ladder. He loses nothing, unless the result of drawing in a lottery be accounted a loss; and he gains a position in society. He premises marriage to a conclusion of status; and his premises are about as important before, and as valueless after, the fact as are those of the logician. Unless he marries, he is accounted a boy, though he should live to be a hundred. He would then follow in position the youngest of the married men, in spite of having lived years enough to be their grandfather. In consequence, betrothals take place while still the principals are children, and are consummated at the earliest possible moment.

The etiquette of mourning sometimes interferes most sadly with a promised marriage, for while the mourning lasts none of the ordinary avocations of life may be carried on. *A fortiori*, the consummation of a betrothal — a marriage — is impossible during that time. The terms of mourning are of a ghastly length. A death in the family is thus a doubly serious event. Indeed, death, being in this manner brought into direct antagonism with possible births, has had a most marked effect in retarding the increase of the population. The population in Korea for many decades, not to say centuries, has hardly more than held its own

Difficult as it may be for a household to minister to the wants of a living father, it is an infinitely more troublesome event to have him die; for then a son is obliged to become to all intents and purposes a hermit for the space of three years. The father, of course, is, of all a man's relatives, the longest mourned; the mourning for a mother comes next in length, requiring a period of two years. But, curiously enough, if she survive her husband, although she has not become the head of the family, which, as we have seen, passed to the eldest son, she is mourned, when she dies, for the same space of time he would have been. For other relatives there are correspondingly long periods. No inconsiderable part of most men's lives is, therefore, taken up with mourning. When a man marries he would have the horror of seeing — like a spectre at the feast, a spectre of the wine-cup — a doubled vista of terrible days of gloom to come, were it not that once married the wife ceases to belong to her own family. But what might be perpetuated through life does indeed sometimes fall as a shadow across his path during that time in which new obligations have been incurred with no corresponding alleviations, the period of betrothal. Each new bereavement among the doubled circle of relatives,

first on one side and then on the other, causes a further postponement of the wished-for event. Couples have, in this fashion, waited for twelve years before they were able to be united.

There is but one true wife, but any man may possess as many concubines as he can support. That they may inhabit the same set of houses, the permission of the wife is necessary; but this is rarely refused.

The children of concubines are in a sort of neutral condition between legitimacy and illegitimacy. As a rule they are illegitimate, though in no sense dishonored by being so, and under certain conditions they are legitimatized. These conditions are in default of issue by the true wife. When this happens, the children of some one of the concubines chosen by the father step into the shoes the others would have worn, and become in all respects what they should have been. As descendants are deemed very important, — as important as ancestors with us, — the practice of legitimatizing is universal. It is a most common occurrence for the reigning sovereign to have been the issue of a concubine. This is less the case in Korea, where the king appoints as his successor any one he sees fit, than in Japan.

The number of concubines being solely a question of the pocket, the great mass of the people have none at all, the poorer officials one or two, and the wealthy many.

Woman is thus no companion for man. She no more forms part of society in its restricted sense, than she enters as a factor into its more general meaning. Social gatherings are exclusively composed of men. But man, after all, even in the far-East, is human; and it is more or less than human not to crave the society of the fair sex. To satisfy this longing, was invented what is best known by the Japanese name "geisha," or "accomplished person." These "accomplished persons"

form a class by themselves, whose duty is to touch with a little gayety the more serious feasts of men. We shall hear more of them later.

Woman has no greater legal than she has social standing. As she enjoys none of the benefits of society, it is but fair that she should be exempted from its obligations and even, in some sort, from its penalties. She is known to the law simply as the wife of so-and-so, and so-and-so is bound to answer for her good behavior. Except that the law admits of no such term, her husband might, with a certain justice, be called her master. If she is caught offending, he is made to suffer, exceptions being granted for a few specified crimes for which he cannot in justice be held to be responsible. It is much as in the Roman law: a master was responsible for the actions of his slaves except in particular cases. The relation also suggests the Roman *patria potestas.*

So far as their appearance is concerned, women in Söul may be divided into three classes: those who are completely invisible, because inside their palanquins; those who are practically invisible, because only to be made out as a mass of clothes walking; and, lastly, those who, though by their daily necessary vocations rendered visible to the material eye, are to the Korean mind as completely invisible as the other two. This distinction in visibility arises solely from wealth. The richer are carried through the streets in closed palanquins, attended by a maid-servant, who follows the cortege or hastens by its side. The less wealthy walk, closely veiled by a dress which, though made after the fashion of any other dress, is thrown, regardless of the odd appearance and staring uselessness of its pendent sleeves, over the head and held together in front of the face by the hand within. The very lowest class — such as draw water at the wells, which always stand in the street — are obliged to go back and forth bareheaded

to their occupation, but are never noticed in any manner by the throng that surges past. To pay them the attention of a glance would be the height of impropriety. To accost one of them would be not only an insult, but so total a want of etiquette as to be looked upon as insanity.

CHAPTER XVI.

PRESENTATION AT COURT.

SHORTLY after my arrival in Söul took place my presentation to his Majesty. A presentation at court is certainly not a momentous affair; but it becomes something of an event in a land where to Europeans it is among the first of its kind. So, at least, it was considered by my sympathetic household. The officials connected with my daily well-being saw in the occasion a prophetic vision of what might, in the fulness of time, befall each of them, and to the servants it was a sufficient reflection of glory to look upon one who was destined so soon to look upon their king. In consequence, I found myself much in the position of a *débutante* dressed and waiting for the all-important moment when she shall depart to her first ball. I was correspondingly looked at, examined, admired, and finally devoutly pinnacled, as one who had suddenly become, by force of circumstances, an object of almost reverential regard. Their simple ecstasy instinctively called up a vision of that adoring family circle in all its personal detail, even down to the aged nurse, always specially summoned in such cases to behold her former darling emerging from the chrysalis of girlhood to become in an hour the resplendent butterfly of fashion.

The moment for departure arrived, and I descended to the courtyard, where my palanquin lay waiting, while my

household stood gathered on the steps to gaze. I crawled into the box, still feeling the glances I could no longer see. The coolies raised me from the ground, and bore me from admiring eyes through the gateway into the street.

The distance to one of the outer gates of the palace was not above a quarter of a mile. Just outside of it the palanquin was set down. I crawled out. As I emerged, I noticed sentries on either hand by the side of the gateway; and advancing toward it an official came forward from within to meet me and act as escort across the great plain of the outer courtyard. This area occupied several acres in extent, while through the middle of it ran a wide paved way made of many small blocks of stone. Along this we walked.[1] Around the square ran a high wall of brick, save where gateways gave admittance to other courtyards beyond. Through the farther of these gateways we eventually passed, amid a crowd of soldiers, not drawn up, as would be the case anywhere else, but gathered in an irregular body, in an off-duty sort of way, whose business consisted apparently in being very much interested in the proceedings. They were all unarmed, and quite without officers. Passing between the lines, or rather squads, we entered another courtyard, at the farther end of which stood a building thronged with officials within and servants without. At our approach several of the former came out on the steps, and among them I recognized the faces of my friends.

They were all clad in court costume. This costume was striking, and not without a certain picturesque beauty, in spite of its oddity. It began with a hat made of finely woven silk in the form of a rounded cone terraced in front. On either side of

[1] Officials summoned to the palace on important business enter by another gateway, — the Hap Mun, or Casket Gate, whence the name has in some sort come to signify the king. The name "Sublime Porte" had its rise in a similar natural custom.

this projected wings, like gigantic ears, fitted into the lower part of the crown, from which they stuck out at right angles. They are said to be appurtenances to typify the ready receiving of his Majesty's commands. The dress was composed of a long silk tunic of a pale pink or an equally pale blue, reaching to the ankles, and tied by a ribbon in a bow over the right breast. Outside of this was worn a belt, rectangular in shape, which fitted the body on the sides, its shortest diameter, and stuck out several inches in front and behind. As it would never have stayed on of itself, it was unostentatiously tied on securely by a silken cord. Sewn on to the tunic just below the chest was an embroidered plastron in gold thread, representing two cranes in flight, correspondingly fitted to each other by being mutually upside down. To the lower ranks is permitted but one of the birds. The crane is, in some sort, a Korean official symbol, as the dragon is a Chinese one. Around the neck the tunic was cut out in an oval, and filling this, sewn on to the inside of the stuff, was a white collar of cotton. On their feet, instead of the customary low shoe, they all wore high boots, the tops of which were lost under the tunics. These imparted to the wearers a certain accoutred appearance, suggestive of heavy weather. The reason of this reversal of the natural order of things, as it seems to us, I was at a loss to understand till after I had observed the ways of the court, when it no longer struck me as strange.

They strode forward to welcome me as I mounted the stone steps, and led me inside to a reception-room, where the American Minister among various court-dignitaries sat awaiting me. As soon as we had shaken hands and I had been presented to such of the company as I did not already know, a collation was served to us on a table which, though by no means large, almost completely filled the room. It was of foreign origin, as were also the chairs about it, — gifts to his Majesty from abroad. It

is one of the strongest traits of Tartar blood, that the Koreans should have withstood their use so long, with China herself using them next door. As yet the supply is very limited, only his Majesty and the Foreign Office having any. Even in matters connected with them, I more than suspect that the chairs formed a part of the portable ornaments, and were carried about from place to place as occasion required. At times they certainly had an individually familiar air.

Among the company sat the Lord High Chamberlain, remarkable not for being Lord High Chamberlain, — for that is a dignity in which rotation in office is not infrequent, — but for having made himself the first official robber in a land pre-eminent in such official specimens of the guild. Barabbas Min had a hard and cunning expression, such as rarely falls to the lot even of those whose business it is to prey upon their kind. He was also distinguished for his relationships. In fact, he owed his position and business prospects to the most important of these, — that of being uncle to the queen. But another of them even more commanded my admiration for its apparent impossibility. He was father to his own nephew; in reality, he was adopted father to this young man who was court favorite. But as everybody omitted the adopted part of the designation in ordinary parlance, and in the same breath that they informed me that he was young Min's father, spoke of young Min's father as dead, and added that this man was very unlike his deceased brother, it was some little while before I clearly comprehended the connection.

We tarried in this hall, tea-drinking, some time, — for nothing in Korea is ever done in a hurry, — until at last a messenger arrived to summon me to the royal presence. We rose, my sponsors and I, bade good-by to the others, and filed out, down the flight of steps, into the courtyard. There were three of us: Hong Yŏng Sik came first, then the American Minister,

and then I. In this order we strode along, in solemn procession, across one court, through two or three gates, and then into another open space. The long court-stride of Hong — the official ceremonial gait, something after the fashion of the stage walk of the old tragedians — lent a certain theatrical impressiveness to our approach. The effect was not diminished by his costume, for he was clad in pale pink clothes. To Korean notions he probably suggested something quite different; for his long stride gave him an up-and-down rhythmical motion not unlike the stately march of a crane when walking, — a bird whose supposed dignity of presence, compared with other fowls, causes it to be greatly admired by both Koreans and Chinese. I had ample opportunity to appreciate his assumed manner; for to walk in Indian file is not the most reassuring of ceremonies. Personally, I have no scruple in confessing that, do my best, I felt I was not that mixture of dignity and ease which I was vainly trying to impersonate. I came to the conclusion that to walk in public is one of the most difficult of accomplishments. Indeed, I mentally indorsed the Hindoo philosopher's maxim — at least as far as dignity was concerned — that to sit is better than to stand.

During our advance it began to dawn upon me why long boots form a part of the court dress, while low shoes are universally worn elsewhere. For in spite of the occasion I could not be quite oblivious to the character of the ground. The truth was that wherever the paving ceased there was an abundance of mud; and with all due respect to one's bearing, it was at times advisable to pick one's way. The mud solved what had before seemed a riddle. Whether or not it be the true cause of the apparent solecism in foot-gear I do not know, but it offered to my mind a sufficient explanation. For within the palace the officials are all obliged

to go on foot, whereas without they are invariably carried in palanquins; whence the need of boots in the former place and the luxury of shoes at all other times.

When we had at last passed safely through the ordeal of the courtyard, we reached a flight of steps at the opposite end, leading to the open pavilion, from which royalty had been scanning us the while. Down the middle of this had been spread a carpet; but our boots were so muddy that we all skirted it, and passed up, balancing ourselves on the bordering edge of stone instead. In this hazardous manner we scaled the eminence where royalty sat. It was a building like the others, except that it was entirely open in front. In the centre, toward the back, flanked by several ministers and protected in front by a table, was seated his Majesty.

No sooner had we reached the top of the steps than Hong fell nearly flat on his face, — the usual Korean prostration before royalty, — while we began the first of our series of three bows, and then continued alternately bowing and advancing till the last one landed us on the farther side of the table. His Majesty rose for the interview. He was a man of about thirty years of age. In stature he was rather under the average Korean height than over it. He may have been five feet seven inches without his shoes, which raised him an inch more.

The king was dressed in what resembled, in general, the court dress, and differed from it only in the details. His hat was somewhat similar to that of the officials; but instead of being black, was of a very dark-blue color. It also had wings; but they were fastened straight up behind, as if folded in rest. His tunic, which was after the same fashion as theirs and similarly tied, was of a brilliant red, — in Korea the kingly color. The belt was richer in material, but similar in shape; and the plastron, instead of having cranes embroidered on it, had the Chinese dragon. In place of the boots, he wore the ordinary

shoe. This, in some sort, carried out my theory of the mud, as he alone needs not to walk about.

His face was singularly pleasing, — one of those faces that you like from the moment you first see it, and that in time you grow to love; and my after-acquaintance with him taught me that his face was truly the mirror of his character. His smile especially was winning. As I stood there with his eyes fixed upon mine, a feeling crept over me that he was really as glad to see me as his words formally expressed. Presentations are not prolific in conversation. The fact is its own best expression. Like all moments which are long prepared for, it was quickly passed. To prolong an effect is in some sort to dull it. A few sentences, and the interview was over.

Then began the retreat. Precisely similar in detail to the approach, everything had to be performed backwards. To turn one's back upon royalty is of course impossible. So we retreated as gracefully as we could, bowing at intervals, till we had reached the mystic number three, and arrived at the same time at the top of the flight of steps. Hong, in the mean time, was prostrating himself as he had done on entering. Once at the steps, we fell again into line, and filed down them in the same order we had come. Then our supernaturally solemn procession took up its march across the courtyard. We had need to walk as impressively as we could; for, though invisible to us, many a female eye was watching the sight from behind the paper sides of the houses. Apparently there were only the group in the Audience Hall and a few soldiers to gaze at us, but in truth we were being scanned by an eager assemblage of fair ones gathered behind the screens. Cruel custom debarred them from witnessing more openly the ceremony. But nothing is insurmountable to female curiosity; and when, in addition to the universal inheritance of their sex in this respect, we remember the long-pent-up accumulation of ages bequeathed

them from an unsatisfied past, it is no wonder that the opacity of paper proved no obstacle to their ingenuity. Had we had the ears to listen, innumerable little pistol-shots would have spoken to us of holes where delicate fingers had perforated the paper to open views for observant eyes. It was under such a fire that we had to conduct our retreat across the square until we had once more reached the friendly cover of the feast pavilion. Here we were met with an enthusiasm befitting our orderly escape from so merciless a scrutiny. Good things were once more set before us, and we had soon forgotten the difficulties of being *en évidence* in the more solid delights of seclusion. But it was only an interlude, a mere truce between the battles; for the ceremony was but half over. There was more to come. There was yet the presentation to the Crown Prince. To add to the awkwardness of tramping about in evening-dress at that hour of the morning, it was horribly cold, and my muscles threatened to become even less manageable than under ordinary conditions. So bitter was it that the American Minister, who had a cold he was afraid of increasing, decided to forego this new ordeal. So Hong and I sallied forth alone. This time we took another direction. We turned to the left instead of to the right, but otherwise we exactly repeated the experiences of half an hour before. Two, however, is a much less awkward number in single file than three; and in spite of an equal number of courtyards, the distance did not seem nearly so long. Besides, custom began to tell. I was beginning to feel as if marching in solemn procession, through the mud, of a winter's day, insufficiently clad in evening dress, under eager examination, was my ordinary pastime.

The Crown Prince received us, installed in his own pavilion, after the same fashion that his father had done. He was a little boy of ten. Seclusion and an enforced dignity befitting his position had given him a look beyond

his years. His face lacked the beauty of his father's; but it is perhaps unfair to criticise what has never known a youth, and has not yet arrived at manhood. The face as yet knows not what it is. The complexion was singularly colorless, but I suspect that much of this, so marked was it, was due to the use of chalk, — a common practice in the far-East. His eyes were very narrow even for an Oriental, and gave him an appearance of being half asleep. His dress closely resembled his father's. He wore the same kind of hat, the same kind of tunic, a similar belt, and like plastron, and his feet were similarly encased in low shoes. Only in the color of the tunic itself was there any marked difference, and this was of a lighter shade than the king's. His life had taken expression from his face, and left only a sort of realization of the treadmill of his position behind. He stood between two tall ministers, who bent over and prompted him as to what he should say before he began to speak. He listened with statue-like passiveness to their whispers, and then repeated in his childish voice his lesson. Only when he got his answer did he turn to them again for counsel. He seemed a touching mixture of dignity and helplessness. The ordeal was rather too much for him. He was not always so quiet, as I discovered on a subsequent occasion, when I caught him peeping out of a back window at my camera, where he supposed he could not be seen, while he was waiting to give me audience, and when I looked up, shut the sliding screen like a flash. In this instance he acquitted himself creditably, and no doubt felt relieved when it was safely over, and he saw me traversing the courtyard on my return. As for me, I went back again to the haven of waiting, and drank more tea. This finished the proceedings. We effected our departure under cover of a cloud of smoke, walked once more down the immense outer court, got into our palanquins, and were carried home.

CHAPTER XVII.

A DAY AT HOME.

EVERY one has at some time been conscious of the half-guilty, no-business-to-be-there-at-that-hour feeling which takes possession of a man at a champagne-flavored morning entertainment. The wedding reception, being our commonest example, has embodied the sensation. It is the last twinge of the mental conscience of the serious man. When he loses that instinctive warning, he is on the high-road to the worst possible of Nirvanas, — an extinct mind in a living body.

I found myself not unfrequently of a morning a prey to one of these spasms. Because one of the first specimens of Western humanity the Koreans had ever seen, and on account of my friendship to their country, I received many morning calls; and I felt that my part in the piece required for its proper performance a little fluid to prevent friction.

In Korea it is never too early to call. The New Year's call of ceremony at the palace begins long before daylight. It is another good reason for not wishing to be born a king. Perhaps, however, the head that proverbially lies so uneasy may not be sorry to leave the pillow. Fortunately for my own comfort, calls upon me were made at a more Christian hour. This was what happened at a call.

As I sat in what I made my reception-room, a servant entered through a hole in the wall; that is, he pushed aside a

pair of sliding screens let into the side of the room, which was cut out in a circle. In this manner the room connected with the rest of my suite of houses. When his long skirts had rustled over what stood for a sort of threshold, — the lower rim of the circle, a foot high, — he announced the visitor, at the same time handing me a strip of red paper, eight inches by four, on which was printed a series of Chinese characters, arranged in a single vertical column. This was the caller's card. In origin, the card is Chinese; and with many other social customs, it was engrafted upon Korean etiquette from the observances of the dragon throne. It is made of paper of the usual thickness, dyed a brilliant carmine on the upper side, which soaks through into a pale pink on the under. On this ground stand out in vivid contrast the black characters of the person's name. Like the customs of every aristocracy, which is still a powerful fact, and not its shadow, a respected feeling, the card is despotically plain. The name stands alone in all the strength of its simplicity. There are no titles of law or of courtesy. The name means more than any title, more than can be written, however finely done, on eight inches by four. It read simply "Hong Sun Mok."

At a nod the servant disappeared, to return ushering in the visitor. I rose. We both bowed, each of us at the same time raising his hands closed, and pressed against one another to the level of his head. This, again, is after the Chinese fashion. It may suggest the general advisability of shaking your own hand rather than the hand of your acquaintance. I purposely say acquaintance, for it is a very different matter in Korea when a man has become your friend. Then you shake his hand, as we should do. I like the practice. It raises hand-shaking to its proper level; for there they make use of the demonstration only after an absence, a separation, not at each fresh reappearance of the person, or in consequence of

the coming of each new dawn. With them it means affection, not affectation.

We then sat down again, and tea was brought in and then tobacco. The material bond of sympathy between host and guest in the far-East is invariably tea and tobacco, as it is coffee and tobacco in the near-East, and as it used to be wine and cigars with us. This was then supplemented in my case, to the delight of the visitors, with something from beyond sea.

In Korea, as elsewhere, there are calls of ceremony and calls that are not. It is only on an introduction, or on a stated occasion of visiting, such as New Year's day, that one's cards are necessary. Familiarity and mutual affection soon put us on a very easy footing. Especially was this the case toward a foreigner. My visitors, having come once, came again; and they stayed a long time — sometimes, I will confess, it seemed to me forever — at a visit. Except for a chosen few, I think short visits, often repeated, preferable. This was one reason why, of all others, I liked the visits of the Foreign Office the best. Its members dropped over constantly to see me, singly or in a body. Sometimes they had something political to say, oftener not. On these latter occasions they made of me an agreeable recreation from the toils of business. I was very conveniently situated. Any one who has inhabited a central room in his college, one easily made a loafing-place, will perfectly understand the situation. But, unlike some such visitants, they remained but a short time, business always affording them a capital stage-exit. Like historic Bob Sawyer, they were sometimes even summoned away; and they bustled off with great assumption of immediate and imperative necessity.

The next man to be announced was a merchant, or, to be more precise, a vender of old curiosities. Quite apart from the man himself, I always felt an excitement, when he appeared, akin to that of drawing in a lottery; for you could never tell

what he would not produce from his only too capacious sleeves. He always struck me as a species of real juggler who added, to the surprise of discovery, the still further delight of uncertainty as to what was about to be discovered. The number and character of the things that man would produce from the recesses of his sleeves was little short of marvellous. Books, paintings, fans, pillow ends, — all came out in turn from the same mysterious emptiness, — for the sleeves never had the look of concealing anything, — and the trick finally wound up with the drawing forth and setting upon the table of a large stone jar, a brush-holder, so thick and heavy that it was unpleasant to carry it across the room, as I found when I tried to move it. This capaciousness of what stood him in lieu of pockets enabled him to walk the streets without in the least betraying his calling. If he was as astute in making a trade as he was deft in concealing his own, I felt at once that I was no match for him. I was probably right in my self-distrust, though about this I was allowed to remain in blissful ignorance.

After the merchant had withdrawn with all his goods in consequence of failure to agree on a price, I heard a scuffling outside, then a tap at the paper screen, and a band of boys from the neighboring school dropped in upon me through the window. For the only material sign, as yet, of a desire to associate with the world at large had been the founding of a school to teach English, and the importing of an Englishman from Japan to teach it.[1] The boys were very proud of what little they had already learned, and took infinite delight in wishing me good-morning in my native tongue. One of them, either more adventurous or more advanced than his fellows, next tried to put a few words together, and then was summarily corrected by his more bashful friends, with that sudden temerity begotten in

[1] August, 1883. This was in January, 1884. They had therefore had five months' schooling.

youth by the all-importance of the fact at issue, such correction being of course oftener wrong than right. At this point I was entirely forgotten for the far more absorbing controversy; and what was begun as a would-be polite speech ended as a successfully maintained proposition. But I turned up again as a final court of appeal.

The boys were very assiduous in their visits. One day one of the most attentive brought me some paintings of his own brush, and they were really exquisitely done. To be born a Korean is already to be born half an artist.

These various good people not infrequently stayed to lunch. In fact, they have been known to stay on and on for hours with that special object. Dinner I invariably ate alone, unless I dined in town or specially invited some one to dine with me. My evenings were exceedingly solitary. There was no happy mean. Everybody came in the morning, nobody at night. Many a night I have watched till the small hours with nothing but a pipe and the printed thoughts of others to keep me company. I had, however, one refuge from myself, in the person of the teacher of the school. He was agreeable, clever, and thoroughly conversant with the far-East, for he had lived fourteen years in Japan. There he had married a Japanese wife, and become the father of a pretty little Eurasian girl. He inhabited at present what had once been a temple in a high corner of the back part of the Foreign Office enclosure,—or compound, as such a collection of buildings and courtyards is called in the English of the far-East. It was not above a stone's-throw away from my own house. But to get there I was obliged to pass through three gates and four courtyards, or four gates and six courtyards, according as I went the longest or the shortest road. But I had not my choice of paths. I was obliged to go one way and return the other; for by so doing I foiled the gates. The way of it was this: At nightfall

the watchman of the compound went his rounds and carefully fastened every gate. But as there were a great many court-yards and they all opened one into the other, what was an inner fastening to the one necessarily became an outer fastening to its neighbor. It was, therefore, always possible for any one who started by being within the outer gateway of all to wander wherever he pleased, provided only he went in the proper consecutive order. Going in that order, all the gates opened to him, — for they were not locked, but simply barred by a wooden bolt; but to walk in the other direction was impossible, for the bolts served all the purposes of locks from the impossibility of getting at them. There was nothing for it on this side but to scale wall after wall, — a difficult and by no means pleasant task. Thus, by always travelling in my unavoidable loop-fashion in one direction, I had nothing more arduous to do than to withdraw the wooden bolts as I came to the several gates, and to remember to return the way I had not come.

These night excursions of mine must have been a source of great annoyance to the watchman who perambulated the compound once an hour regularly through the night. For the very possibility of opening all the gates became, when considered from the other side, an impossibility of shutting any of them again after passing through. I therefore left them unbolted. So the faithful watchman spent his time in continually reclosing what he thought he remembered to have left securely fastened. One poor old gate suffered sadly from this constant opening and shutting. It came entirely off its hinges, and then split into two halves, which had to be propped up as nearly into their former positions as possible, and then kept there by means of a heavy stone rolled against their lower extremities. I found it in this plight one night; but not perceiving its crippled condition, pushed against it, and then felt positively guilty

of cruelty when, after resisting my first shove, it fell at my second, with a sort of groan, into a heap of ruins.

On returning from one of these visits one night, I met the watchman. I say I met him, because in no sense did he seek me. I heard him off at the other end of one of the courts, and waited for him to come up. The light from a bull's eye and the incessant sound of a bell warned the only senses possible of his approach. I had seen his *ignis fatuus* of a lantern in the distance many a time before; and as to hearing him, I had done it so often that I felt some curiosity to examine one whose noise had formed an inseparable part of my midnight reveries. He and an associate — for a subordinate accompanied him — carried between them three odd-looking utensils of their trade. The chief patrol held in one hand a dark-lantern, — a most curious and ingenious invention, called, on the *lucus a non* principle, a thief's lantern, — while in the other he swung a bell. The last he only ceased to ring when, from some reason like the shutting of a gate, he had not hands enough for the purpose. He kept up this continuous ringing in order to give any thief that might happen to be about due warning to escape. It is a practice which the Korean watchman shares with those of China and Japan. This certainly renders the occupation of the night-watchman less exciting, if slightly more onerous; for any thief who waited to be caught under such circumstances would be not only a knave but a fool. Whether it equally prevents crime may possibly be doubted. In Japan the patrols also cry out at intervals, "Look out for fire;" but in Korea this danger, from the different construction of the houses, is not so imminent, and they walk their rounds in silence except for the bell. The lantern the watchman carried was a spherical shell left open on one side, and with a round piece of wood, like a broom-handle, let in diametrically opposite, and projecting about eight inches, for the hand to grasp. The whole was

covered with gaudily painted paper, on which were pasted Chinese characters and other designs, betokening long life, happiness, and other desirable tidbits of fortune. Why so much taste is wasted on the dark is a problem; for, being on the outside, they are of course invisible both to the patrol and to any one else. However, the feeling that they are there may possibly be found consoling in the long hours of the night. But the real beauty of the concern lies within. On the inside is swung, by a system of double joints, the tin frame for a candle, which, by this means, has motion in any direction. The object is that the broom-handle may be held in the hand in any position, while the lantern is pointed like a blunderbuss at the person to be inspected, without, in so doing, displacing the candle, whose stand is properly weighted to fall, from the vertical. The whole suggested the scooped-out pumpkin of one's boyhood, carved by youthful ingenuity to represent some diabolical apparition.

To the associate fell the duty of carrying the third implement, — an iron bar fitted with iron chains. This served for handcuffing. The bar was the only one of the tools not in ordinary use. The darkness saved me from discovering how rusty it had grown.

The patrol suffered my inspection with great forbearance, considering how reversed were the parts we were respectively supposed to play, and I left him with a sense of having not a little surprised the good man; but I judge that he may have found some consolation in the light the meeting threw upon a certain hitherto mysterious point. The secret of the gates ajar must from that moment have ceased to disturb his nightly cogitations.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HOUSE OF THE SLEEPING WAVES.

ONE day a dinner was given me by the Governor of the province. Despite the fact that it was not the season for country parties, — the month was January, — he had, for certain reasons, chosen a spot outside the city in which to give it. In virtue of his office, he was the temporary owner of a villa on the banks of the river Han; and whether it was the fact of precarious possession, or a sense of the peculiar fitness of the place for festivities, he had fixed upon this villa for the occasion. We were not, on that account, however, to be deprived of the pleasure of seeing those city buildings of which he was ruler, for we were first to rendezvous at the province-house.

Accordingly, an hour before noon, we set out from home in palanquins, and were carried across the city and through the west gate, just outside of which stands the magistracy for the province of Kyöng Keui To.[1] The building is placed without the gates for technical reasons, but for convenience is put as near as possible to what it is not allowed to enter. The scrolls on its gates showed it to be a public building, and the number of soldiers that were lounging about outside gave further evidence of its being in use at the present time. Entering by the gateway, an imposing structure, even as among magistracies, we

[1] The words mean "five parts, or whole" (Keui), "of the capital" (Kyöng), "province" (To). The five parts meant are the north, the east, the west, the south, and the centre. The idea is Chinese.

came into the outer courtyard. In one corner of it were stacked spears, as we should stack muskets. These suggestively Tartar implements are, however, more for effect than for service, as firearms have been in use in the far-East somewhat longer than with us. At this spot our palanquins were set down, and getting out we walked through the inner court to the hall where the Governor awaited our coming. An inner room was furnished with a sort of by-the-way collation. Tea was immediately served, and I noticed that the bowls were different from any I had seen before. They were rudely enough made, but the colors of the butterflies and flowers upon them were really beautiful. They turned out to be of Korean manufacture of two years before. Previous to that time, for centuries, Korean pottery had been plain, either unglazed or glazed, of a sombre greenish hue. In the past the pottery of the peninsula was very famous; and this was the first symptom of a desire to revive, though with color in place of form, what has become with them a lost art.

The tea is drunk after the Chinese fashion, from covered bowls as much larger than our ordinary teacups as ours are larger than the Japanese. The lid, which always rests, the concave side downward, over the cup, and from being a little smaller fits inside of it, is tilted slightly away from one when the whole is raised to drink, and thus a zone opened through which the liquid flows out. It is then replaced again, as before, in order to keep the tea hot. A misuse of this lid, either through ignorance or intent, gave rise to the saucer, which is purely a European invention, quite unknown in the far-East. In all probability, some cup and its lid were originally shipped home together; and those who received them, recognizing their interdependence but ignorant of its character, suggested this connection. If we are prone to regard far-Eastern methods as our own upside down, we must

certainly admit that for once the far-Orientals can return the compliment.

These little social amenities took place in a small room on one side of the building, the centre being occupied, as is the case in buildings of this class, by an open hall-way closed only at the back. The room was full of people; for though we were but four, entertainers and entertained included, the space near the entrance was crowded with servants standing up. The higher the rank of an official, the longer his train of followers, whose duty in life apparently consists in being constantly visible. They play the part of chorus, looking becomingly grave at what is serious, and tittering most appreciatively whenever anything funny is said.

After a smoke, we all set out again for the river, but in as scattered a condition as we had come so far. From the magistracy to the villa was a distance of two or three miles through the suburbs of the town, — collections of villages interspersed with fields. As these fields were for upland crops, and it was midwinter, there was but little beauty. What picturesqueness there was, came from the houses and from the exceeding unevenness of the road. Not being used for wheels, — that great cause of roads, properly so called, — it was nothing but a track over a country by no means level. Wherever it was not frozen hard, it was deep in spongy mud; and the bulls of burden — the only frequenters of it except men — increased the vileness of its condition. To their trampling were largely due the sloughs which, on a slight rise in temperature, principally composed it. It came into existence by being used, and continued to exist for the same reason.

At every mile or so the palanquin-bearers deposited their burden at the side of the street, — which was almost more of a relief to the carried than to the carriers; for between the cold and the cramped position I had reached that most wretched



AN OUTLYING BRANCH OF THE CITY'S WALL
CROSSING A STREAM.

aggravation of misery, impotence of the muscles and yet aching of the nerves. As soon as we stopped, the bystanders crowded around to get a glimpse of me. But to receive such attention, it was by no means necessary to wait for the stopping-places. In the midst of the journey, while actually in motion, the very curious felt no hesitation in thrusting their heads fairly inside the palanquin to peer at me.

A large part of the scenery consisted of graveyards. These were not fenced-in enclosures, but collections of mounds dotting the hills. Occasionally a stone slab stuck up from out the withered grass; but such memento was the exception, not the rule. Usually the graves were only rounded swellings in the grass-covered surface of the treeless slopes. The hill-tops, not the valleys, had been chosen as their site.

With all their reverence for their departed ancestors, the Koreans recognize that, after all, the land is more useful to the living than to the dead. Graveyards, or more properly collections of graves, always occupy the hillsides, not, so far as I could learn, from any superstition connected with the position, but solely because, so placed, they interfere less with the wants of the inhabitants. The valleys are needed for roads, rice-fields, and houses, while the hillsides are even less valuable under the Korean system of agriculture than they are with us. They are therefore given to the dead.

How the common people became possessed of a place to bury their dead is a species of mystery, for to them the seizing of mountains for the purpose is not permitted. This practice is a perquisite of the official class. To every official belongs some particular mountain which is his private family tomb. No other person is allowed on the property, nor would this noble think of burying his family elsewhere. Should he not happen to own one such natural mausoleum, or should the manes of his ancestors demand a change of situation, — for not infrequently they

become dissatisfied with their quarters, — he looks about him for some mountain, not already the property of another, and seizes that; for whatever common people may happen to be squatting on it at the time have no rights. The practice lends itself easily to various abuses, for, the mountain once become his property, he may put it to any uses he pleases; and he often does. It is a cheap and effective method of acquiring land. Unfortunately, it is limited in its sphere by the concurrence of other nobles.

Past these mortuary suburbs — for the dead may never be buried within the city wall — we were borne at the usual fast walk, and then through villages composed of rude huts, till at last we reached the river bank at a point where one of the knolls, so common a feature in this part of Korean scenery, overhung the river Han. Upon this knoll was perched the villa we were seeking. It was called "The House of the Sleeping Waves." They were certainly asleep that day; for the river was fast bound in ice, and the air was so cold that we were fain to seek a hasty refuge inside the screens. Four braziers, one at each corner of the room, and some very strong "sul," tasting not unlike gin, somewhat revived us; and at last I ventured out again to gaze upon the panorama at our feet. Directly below lay the river, coiled over the land like a mammoth ice python. Beyond it stretched the vast plain of sand we had crossed with so much toil on our journey up to Söul; and in the distance the mountains, wrapped in snow, answered us, as it were, from across the level breadth. Scattered over the ice were quantities of moving figures, that gave the scene an ideal Dutch look; and canopying the whole was a sky of fleecy white clouds sailing steadily athwart the blue.

The house itself had in former times been the home of a general-in-chief of the army. Now it belongs to the State, and its use is a perquisite of the governorship of the province.

Here the Governor comes when he feels peculiarly poetic, and gazing over the river from the terrace is inspired to song. The present Governor, however, was more given to keeping up the old reputation than the new. As he himself held a military position, we were in no lack of soldiers in consequence of the change in ownership. The insignia of this second dignity was a leathern girdle tied in front, and ending in two leathern knobs for tassels.

It was too cold to linger over the view, and for once at least I regretted that indoors and outdoors are in Korea two different worlds. The paper of the window, in place of glass, completely isolates the one from the other. There was nothing for it, however, but to return to the braziers and the sul.

"Sul" is the generic name for wine in Korea, as "sake" is in Japan; and the two names denote the same substance. It is a drink made from rice, sometimes fermented, sometimes distilled, so that it resembles, according to its kind, either beer or whiskey. In taste it faintly suggests sherry, but with a peculiar aroma of its own. It equally faintly suggests gin. Perhaps no further commentary is needed to explain the impossibility of likening it to anything. Usually it is quite mild; what was now served to us, on account of the cold, being exceptionally strong. In one respect it differs from the Japanese. It is commonly opaque, muddy, whereas saké is clear. There are said to be clear kinds in Korea, too; but being more expensive, they are not in ordinary use. In olden times it was opaque in Japan, and the history of the change is handed down in the following anecdote.

Once upon a time, in the midst of a feast, a boy was sent out to the kitchen to heat some more sake; for sake to be delicious must, to native taste, be hot, and relays of it are therefore constantly being heated and brought in as the feast

progresses. It is warmed in tall thin-necked earthen jars over a charcoal fire until it reaches the proper temperature, and is then decanted into porcelain bottles and served. While engaged in his task, the boy carelessly let fall into the wine a piece of charcoal from among the embers of the fire. This was most calamitous; and for a moment the boy stood aghast, awe-struck by its descending gurgle. He could not see the liquid for the smallness of the opening, and his fears had all the greater scope. The more he considered, however, the more his courage returned. After all, it was a big piece of charcoal; and though it was a horribly dirty substance, to be sure, still, perhaps, by taking great care he might be able to decant it so carefully that all the charcoal would be left behind in the jar, from which he could take it out at his leisure. He already felt better. To his horror, then, when he came to pour it, there flowed out not dirty sake, indeed, but what was worse, a perfectly clear and transparent liquid, that looked so utterly unlike sake that everybody would be sure to see the mishap at a glance. He carried it in, his knees shaking under him, and watched with fearful anxiety as he served it to the first guest. There it was, sure enough, the tell-tale liquid, like water for clearness. In dismay, he confessed what he had done, and was on the point of receiving condign punishment when somebody had the curiosity to taste the wine, and discovered that it had not been injured in the least, but rather improved in delicacy of flavor. The guilty inventor found himself, to his great surprise, praised instead of punished; and ever afterwards it became the practice to drop on purpose a bit of charcoal accidentally into the sake, until at last they took to filtering it altogether.

While I sat sipping my sul, my thoughts meditatively engaged in following the pleasurable course of the wine downwards, all of a sudden a band struck up in the next room, on

the other side of a thin partition which completely hid it from view. The effect was startling in the extreme; I felt as if I had been struck, instead of the instruments. The band must have stolen in there when nobody was looking, and then let off at us in this unexpected manner. Just as I was preparing to dislike it for its intrusion, — as we take aversions to certain people from their mode of address, — my ear was caught and my indignation arrested by the peculiarity of the sound. It seemed like an apology meant to deprecate my nascent wrath. There is something singularly plaintive in Korean music. I think it is due to unlimited quaver. It is impossible for me to describe it, as it has always been impossible for me to remember it; and I am still in a state of doubt as to whether, on the whole, it is agreeable or the reverse. I forgave it; but one forgiveness apparently was not enough to satisfy its tender conscience. It went on repenting of itself, as it sounded, for a good quarter of an hour. When at last the band paused exhausted, two military trumpeters, with the same unexpected abruptness, launched into a duet outside; and then there was silence by the space of fifteen minutes, when the thing began again.

During dinner, in the course of the small talk we bandied about, a poser was most unpleasantly given me in the shape of a personal conundrum. I was asked to guess the age of my host. Now, in Korea it is a great compliment to be thought to look old. This, fortunately, I knew. So far I was safe. But unfortunately for truth's sake, my host looked singularly young for his age; for his age I also happened to know. His was a most lamentable exception to a general rule; for a Korean almost invariably looks older than he is, so that with them truth is flattery, and what is meant for flattery turns out to be truth. But what was I to do now? Should I sacrifice veracity to a desire to please, or a desire to

please to a stern sense of veracity? I took a middle course, and guessed his age to be what I knew it was. In the explanation that followed the laugh, so much talk was raised as to cover any retreat I fancied.

We went out on to the piazza, and then I thought I should like to try the ice. So we descended to the river. The stream was solidly frozen over, and we got upon it without the least difficulty. The ice was covered with bands of fishermen, most of them in motion, each man armed with an implement for cutting holes, and each dragging a sled. This they sat down upon while they waited for bites. The contrivance was also designed undoubtedly to carry home the fish they might catch. While I watched them, they caught nothing. But this was ill luck, for from these fisheries are supplied the large quantities of fish which are daily eaten in the capital. From the numbers engaged in the pursuit, I should judge that it was the principal occupation of the villages which crowd the banks of this part of the Han River. Where we were was about midway between the two ferries farthest down stream, something short of a mile from the place where we had crossed it on the journey up, and in the very centre of the river suburbs. Both water-fishing and agriculture are at a standstill at this season of the year; for during two months the river is solidly frozen over, and the ground does not open for the first digging over for the rice crop till the middle of March. During this enforced rest the inhabitants spend their time in transporting brushwood into the city, and in these fisheries.

The fishermen were fishing for what is known in Japan as "koi." Underneath the ice is stretched a net. Then at intervals upon its surface are dug holes through the crust, and down these are let strings with bare hooks fastened to their ends. The fishers then start some distance behind the spot where the net is hung, with the series of holes between them and it, and begin

to make as terrific a noise upon the surface of the ice as they are capable of producing, gradually, as they do so, approaching the net. The terrified fish make off as fast as they can, but are unable to escape because of the net, and in their bewildered condition are caught upon the hooks as they rush heedlessly past. The hooks are formed of three barbs at right angles to one another. It is only in winter that these bare hooks are used; in summer the fishing is carried on with hooks that are baited. Enticement succeeds to repulsion; and in this pursuit, as in others, it is no doubt the more efficacious method of the two.

With the exception of the fishermen, the Koreans were not at home upon the ice. They went on it under protest, as it were, and showed much anxiety lest my rashness should end in my falling through. The officials especially cut a ludicrous figure as they ventured upon the slippery surface, propped on either side by a body-servant, after the fashion of a pair of human crutches. There was a certain need of these stays here, but the custom knows no such actual exigencies. It is a mere question of dignity. It is etiquette for all officials, whenever they condescend to walk at all, to be upheld under the arms by a couple of men. Official presence consequent upon this action oversteps, it seems to me, that bound which is said to separate the sublime from the ridiculous, especially when the motion quickens, as it not infrequently does, into a run. To witness some poor official hastening, or rather hastened, in this manner to a rendezvous, gives one but a humorous idea of the lofty gravity of station.

The river is here so subject to the tide as materially to affect the freshness of the water, and therefore to lower the freezing-point, so that the extent and duration of the ice means more than at first appears in the way of cold. In view of such opportunities it is not a little surprising that skates should never

have been invented; the more so, as the overflowed rice-fields would furnish the best possible of places for the pastime. Yet I neither saw nor heard of any. Even sliding upon the ice, which I was obliged to substitute in lieu of the more noble invention, was set down in their minds as a foolish foreign eccentricity. Indeed, the zeal with which not only friends and attendants, but even disinterested bystanders and lookers-on, endeavored to warn me off the ice, would have done credit to the hen with her obstinate duckling.

Pushing always forward, I found the ice perfectly firm everywhere, and reached without difficulty the *chevaux de frise* along the opposite shore. This I scrambled over, and climbed up the bank. Once on the bank, there was nothing to do but to return; for the bluff on which the house stood was, like most Korean suburbs, much better to look from than to look at. The mass was good enough; but at this distance the surface had an excoriated appearance, due to indiscriminate trampling.

We mounted again to the House of the Sleeping Waves to sip that latest *nouveauté* in Korea, after-dinner coffee. As we sat on the veranda, there stole up to us the ring from the ice as the fishers tramped over it, — that hollow booming sound, which always seems so to typify and enhance the deadness of a winter landscape. And then, as it was a simple dinner, one without the addition of geisha or other inducement to linger, we prepared to set out on the journey back to town, amid a flourish of trumpets and much handling of muskets on the part of the Governor's retinue.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WANT OF A RELIGION.

IF you were to stand upon the wall of the city of Söul, and let your glance wander over the roofs that, not unlike the waves of a sea, lay stretched out before you, you could hardly fail to be struck by a very conspicuous absence, — the absence of anything in the shape of a building which rose above its fellows. The wide sameness of construction would affect your senses, and influence the general impression made upon you by the view at your feet, without at first your being quite conscious of the cause. Some feature, common to panoramas of the kind, is here wanting. As you came to analyze the sensation, you would find that it was the effect of uniformity. Before you lie some square miles of thatch and tile, with little or nothing beyond the natural unevenness of the ground to diversify the view. Your eye seeks in vain those loftier structures which serve to fix it, and give it, as it were, points of departure for the rest. It is a view lacking accentuation. It is a view which suggests, by inference, a singular equality among the people, which could show itself in so striking a uniformity in their dwellings. One would think it the expression of advanced democracy, not to say the fulfilment of an ultra-extravagant socialistic dream. And yet there could be nothing so unfounded. There is probably no country in the world so completely the opposite in its institutions to such a supposition. Not only is

its government no rule by the people, it is in no sense a rule for the people. It is as much in the interest of a few, as the power is in the hands of those few; and at the top of all sits a despotic king. What is it, then, that is wanting? A religion. No spire leads the thought to heaven.

If we will consider for a moment, we shall realize that it is to religion that cities have been indebted for the greater part of their architectural monuments. Whether the religion be Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, or something else, has not mattered to the result. The fact is just as true in Kioto or Delhi as in Rome or London. All religions have been powers which, in the matter of building, have universally surpassed even that of the rulers of the land themselves. The vast extension and the zeal of the organization has been such as to call into play the resources of every one of its legions of followers; and its wants, architecturally, have been on a scale with its resources. No wonder that in all times and among all peoples it has usurped the lion's share of the talents of architects. Take away this patron, therefore, and at one blow you deprive a place of the greater part of its imposing structures. This is what has happened in Korea. There is not a single religious building in the whole of Söul, nor is any priest ever allowed to set foot within the city's gates; and what is true of Söul is true of every walled city of the land.

The fact is as unique as it is, especially in its consequences, of singular interest. China, on the one hand, and Japan, on the other, offer, in their general characteristics in this respect, no difference to European customs. In both lands religious buildings dot the cities in the same diversifying manner as with us. Detailed differences in appearance there certainly are, but these are due far more to a difference in architecture than to any change in the motive cause. Neither people being architecturally great, there is very little of the grand in their productions;

and in Japan especially, owing to a comparative absence of pagodas, religious buildings do not stand out to the eye as do our spires or cathedrals. But they are there, for all that; and a little knowledge and attention will reveal them, even in a panoramic and distant view, as clearly as elsewhere. Korea stands in this respect in isolated suggestiveness.

For such an utter dearth suggests something beyond what meets the eye. It not only attests a present, but it hints at a past. It suggests the sudden banishing of a religion which once held sway; for had no religion worthy the name supplanted the aboriginal superstitions which form the emotional thought-product of all peoples in their primitive state, this superstition itself would have left its own monuments behind it. Now, in the case of Korea, remains of this description are not numerous enough to satisfy the principle. There are, it is true, certain shrines, sacred trees, and memorial buildings to be found throughout the land; but they are neither common enough nor sufficiently imposing to have ever marked the full development of a live and all-absorbing superstition. Especially are they few in just the places where we are seeking them now, — namely, in the cities. We are therefore led to suppose the existence, at some past time, of a social cataclysm, — a cataclysm which at once and completely overthrew an existing faith. Such a cataclysm did actually take place in Korea, and the land to this day has never recovered from its effects.

As to the way in which it came about, the following is a Korean explanation: It was at the time of the great Japanese invasion of three hundred years ago. Up to that time, Korea was like its neighbors, who have ever been rather tolerant than otherwise of religious beliefs. They have usually harbored two or three at a time, which have managed to live at peace in the placid bosom of the race. The invasion took place just as the sixteenth century of our era was lapsing into the seventeenth.

In 1598 Kato and Konichi set sail from Japan — much as William the Conqueror did from Normandy, with only the reciprocal change of continent for island in the two cases — to subjugate their neighbor kingdom across the sea; and after a passage of much the same length, they landed at Pusan, as he did at Pevensey. There is certainly something grander in a flotilla bound for conquest than in any army. We are moved by the daring that braves both Nature and man. So was Nature touched herself, and she let them across in safety. Then began the march up from the sea; for, unlike England, there was no gallant Harold to oppose them, — none who, after worsting one enemy, had marched (as is even to-day a marvel in tactics) from sea to sea to front the other foe. Korea was paralyzed by the boldness of the deed. She seems hardly to have realized the situation. Her seclusion has always colored to her mind the actions of the outside world with something of the impossibility of fulfilment of a dream. And the Japanese column moved on with the irresistible force of a natural catastrophe.

The invaders were plucky then, as they are plucky now. For all that, they did not despise stratagem, so Korean tradition informs us; for the two rival generals were racing by different roads to the capital, and time, for once in the history of the East, became of account. Neither could afford to stop and lay siege, lest his rival should get ahead of him. To gain access, therefore, to those citadels which they could not take by assault, the Japanese adopted a disguise ready at hand. Some of them donned the broad-brimmed hats of the Buddhist priests, that sweep down on the sides so as to conceal completely the face of the wearer. They give men the appearance of mushrooms walking. Thus insured against detection, the invaders gained admittance to the outstanding castles and put the garrisons to the sword.

The inoffensive priests suffered for the depredations of the wolves in sheep's clothing. When the Japanese withdrew, which did not happen, permanently, till thirty years afterward, the Korean Government decreed that for future safety no priest should ever, on any pretence whatsoever, set foot within the gates of a walled city. The expulsion of the priests was naturally followed by the gradual disappearance of the buildings. The body of religion — its structures — crumbled again to dust, and the spirit winged its flight from persecuting man to rest among the mountains. So religion in Korea died.

Such is one explanation. But there is grave reason to doubt it. It savors far too much of a desire to father upon the hated victorious Japanese the destruction of everything that Korea has lost. The account given in the native histories is more prosaic, but more trustworthy. The other is interesting as showing up one side of the Korean character, — an utter untrustworthiness in matters between themselves and others. It comes out even more markedly in their accounts of battles which they are forever winning, and yet somehow after which they invariably retreat.

According to the historical version, some centuries ago, there were two parties in the State, — one wedded to Confucianism, the other equally attached to Buddhism. The Buddhists had grown exceedingly corrupt. A struggle took place between the two parties; the Buddhist supporters were worsted, and their expulsion was decreed and carried out.

Buddhism was banished; thenceforward it lived only in the depths of the country. Still, it was, properly speaking, not so much banished as in part destroyed; its existence in cities came to an end. But the life of Buddhism has always consisted of two parts; the Church has ever sought communion with Nature as much as converse with men. The

monasteries scattered throughout the country are as integral and important a portion of it as are the temples to which throng the crowds of the great cities. In consequence of the decree, the temples in Korea ceased to exist, but the monasteries continued as before. The law did not directly affect them; but indirectly they suffered from its effects. Banishment from the cities produced two results. First, desuetude rendered the mass of the people quite oblivious to religious matters; and secondly, the withdrawal of religion from the seats of power threw the profession into disfavor with the aristocracy. Members of the highest families would not enter it, and its ranks were consequently recruited from a less educated class. This tended to lower it still further. Endowments became less in number, and smaller in amount; and religion, even the monastic half, instead of being as in Japan a live and powerful institution, dwindled till it became only the hermit remains of its former self. The nearer to the cities the worse the curse; so that now it is only afar in the mountains that anything approaching its old-time glory still lingers. What its features are, I shall have occasion to mention later when I come to describe an expedition I took to a certain monastery to the north of Söul.

Here, then, we have a community without a religion, — for the cities are to a peculiar degree the life of the land, — a community in which the morality of Confucius for the upper classes, and the remains of old superstitions for the lower, take its place.

The materials of which the monuments were constructed have still further effected their eradication. Throughout the far-East wood is the common article employed in the building of temples. Though occasionally stone or some other more durable substance is used, temples or pagodas so constructed, in whole or in part, are rare.

It is to one of these rare exceptional occasions — in this instance to the stone of which it is made — that is due the preservation of the only pagoda still extant in Söul. This structure is not a true pagoda. It is a pagoda only in form; and now it is but a neglected ornament in a certain man's back-yard. But it deserves to be mentioned for its beauty as well as for its lonely survivorship. It hardly rises above its present lowly position, for it is not above twenty-five feet high. So little does it overtop the roofs of even the low Korean houses that surround it, that it baffles by a singular delusiveness one who attempts to reach it. It lies almost in the heart of the city, not far from one of the main thoroughfares; and it is while walking down this thoroughfare that one catches a distant glimpse of it. The distant glimpse never becomes a nearer view. From afar it is a conspicuous object, and on a closer approach it vanishes. It reappears only when it has once more been left a long distance behind; while from any other point of view than this street it is hardly visible at all. Piqued into curiosity, I determined to ferret it out and see what it was, even at the risk of dispelling the charm.

The approach, as I expected it would do, led me up several narrow cross streets, and eventually landed me before an ill-kept little garden, in the midst of which rose the deserted solitary pagoda. As I could get no good view of it, such as I wanted, from the alley-way where I stood, I was obliged to ask permission to break one of the most sacred of Korean rites, — no less heinous an offence than the climbing to a neighboring ridgepole. The act was not reprehensible on the score of trespass, — my asking permission precluded that, — but the climbing to any, even one's own, roof is in Korean eyes a grave affair, for it is a question of statute. It is forbidden by law to go upon one's own housetop without giving

one's neighbors formal notification of one's intention to do so. The object of the law is to prevent any woman's being accidentally seen by one of the other sex. The women's suite of houses are in the rear of the compound, and their occupants might easily be overlooked when in the enjoyment of their gardens from such a vantage-ground.

The owner of the building I was at present desirous of scaling courteously granted me permission to mount upon his roof, and himself afforded me the best means he could to do so. By the help of some nondescript wooden constructions and the zealous rather than dexterous assistance of the family and its friends, we all managed to get up, including the camera. The good Kim, an invaluable attendant, performed, for a Korean, prodigies of skill; but habit was so potent that all the other Koreans, including the owner of the house, remained below. They found the sight, however, a most interesting spectacle, and collected in the alley-way till from above the line of spectators looked like a ribbon of upturned faces. I have reason to believe that the proprietor neglected to notify his neighbors of my intention, as I caught a woman in an adjoining back-yard in the act of hanging out some washing. Unfortunately, she did not tarry long enough for me to photograph her, but dodged under shelter again with virtuous rapidity.

The pagoda was well worthy the toil involved in the getting a view of it. Although it was eight stories in height, it was composed, the whole of it, of two pieces of stone. Not, properly speaking, a real pagoda, it was an ornamental structure in the form of one. The stories were carved to represent an actual building, while what should have been their sides was exquisitely chiselled in bas-reliefs of celebrated personages. The white granite had become slightly discolored with age, but enough of its former purity remained to bring it into effective contrast with the sombre gray of the houses. The

garden in which it stood was a shabby, sad-looking little hole, not above twenty feet square; and the whole place, pagoda and all, looked — as in truth it was — utterly forgotten.

As soon as we descended, the good man asked us in to a little afternoon tea, and added to his native hospitality much interest in the proceedings.

The idea of the pagoda is Indian; and the Chinese, when they adopted, together with the Buddhist religion, this which had come to be one of its expressions, took the idea without directly copying the form. When the Koreans, in their turn, came to borrow, they took both idea and form from the Chinese, their predecessors in the line of possession.

What I mean by the idea, as distinguished from the form, will appear by looking at the structure itself. The most cursory examination will show the pagoda to be unlike other tall and slender structures in one peculiar and fundamental respect. It is not a unit, but a conglomerate. Instead of being a perfect whole, it suggests a series of buildings of the ordinary Chinese type, placed one above another skywards. The suggestion is no accident, but the result of design. Each of these stories, whose number varies in different specimens, typifies a Buddhist heaven. They represent the successive stages through which the soul, in its advance toward purification, must inevitably pass. This is the idea embodied in the pagoda. This much, then, the Chinese adopted; but in the expression of the stories they followed their own models, just as they did in the temples which they erected in honor of the same religion. This intent — that of repetition — counts undoubtedly for something, in the quaintness with which the pagodas impress the Western eye.

Closely connected in the far-East with the subject of religion is the matter of fixed and stated amusements. The church is the first link in a chain of development of which the

stage is the last. The beginnings of theatrical representations consisted of certain religious performances at the Buddhist temples. Strictly religious at first, these were simply processional chantings, which were, in fact, services of the Buddhistic ritual. From this sacred origin they became gradually secularized and separated, until they appear as solemn chanted renderings of historical events. It was very slow music to very slow movement, and there was no stage setting. This period is still kept alive in the No dances of Japan. To call them serious would be to make of the ordinarily serious the frivolous, by contrast. Statues endowed with appropriately stiff motion, and with voice to endure but not to change, form a more fitting parallel. Splendid automata they appear, with clothes a very marvel of starch for rigidity of shape. And yet, once toned down to the occasion, the spectator cannot but be impressed with a dignity which is itself artistic.

Then the comedies were written, and the separation from the parent stock was complete. From this point the stage advanced, as it has done everywhere, from the remote and unnatural to the every-day and near at hand, — as we may say, from the abstract to the concrete. In Japan the result has been one of the finest stages the world has produced. In fact, it is not going too far to rank the Shintomiza, the great theatre of Tokio, as but little inferior to the Théâtre Français, with which, of all theatres, it is most worthy to be compared.

In view of this ancestral connection, therefore, it is not surprising that consequent upon the abolition of religion in the past should follow at present an absence of the stage. The theatre proper does not exist in Korea. Whatever histrionic talent lay innate in the people, never got the encouragement of a place from which to make its *début;* and to no profession are a local habitation and a name more conducive to successful development. The setting of a piece is, in a twofold manner, an aid to

its effect. It encourages the performer to believe in his own illusions, and thus be what he would seem, while it adds another element of attraction to the audience. He is criticised, if we may so express it, with only half a mind, while he himself is left with a whole one to create.

This aid Korea has lacked. Histrionic art there has never risen above the nomadic stage. Character performers, who stroll the streets, and let themselves out in unaided simplicity for entertainments, are the only representatives of the profession; and it speaks volumes for their inborn ability that they produce the illusions they do. If the art in the peninsula had not received the check we have mentioned, and had not been hindered from other sources, there seems no reason why it should not have rivalled that of Japan. How much more interesting, as well as gay, life in Söul would become under such circumstances, will be fully appreciated only by those who have passed a winter in the Korean capital.

These bands of performers combine other kindred callings with that of actor. They are, first and always, musicians. Their instruments consist of the big and the little drum, — the latter shaped like an hourglass and struck with the palm of the hand, — the two-stringed fiddle, and several flutes. They are the same instruments that are used in the Buddhist temples, both in Korea and Japan; and the character of the music is similar to that of the religious services. Secular music thus differs in Korea from what it has become in Japan. In the former it has remained what it was in its sacred days; in the latter it has, in course of time, entirely changed from its original idea, both in instruments and in style. The change has been markedly for the better, for the Korean music sounds plaintive. Contrast and some slight adaptation have rendered the sober the sad. The musicians play commonly squatting upon the floor, like the priests in the temple, but without all

the ceremony which attaches to the laying down of the instruments and resuming them at the proper moment, and the many other formulæ which convert the service into a pageant.

The acting is confined principally to one man. He is not only the star, but the all in all, the others being merely necessary accessories. He learns no written part, but improvises according to his own versatile genius; and he does it exceedingly well. All the events of Korean life, all the humorous traits in city or country character, find in him a ready and clever mimic; and he affords amusement, not only to his audience, but to his fellow-actors, who find it impossible at times to keep their countenances.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DEMON WORSHIP.

AMONG the Koreans, the one stretching out to something beyond what they can see and hear, the universal craving for the supernatural, finds its expression in a belief which, if lacking in anything lofty, is at least not devoid of a certain picturesqueness. It may, with more than ordinary reason, be divided into a practice, on the one hand, and certain less vital principles, on the other. So far as the practice is concerned, it might be called the belief in evil spirits. To call it a worship of spirits, generally, would be unnecessarily to extend the cult; for in this branch of the superstition one never hears of any good spirits, except in the most distant, indefinite way. As these latter always do what they should in the working of the cosmogony, it is quite needless to pay them any attention; indeed, when we come to think of it, an invariably beneficent deity, in the old pagan sense, — not a creator, but a mere concomitant of creation, — is a somewhat useless piece of fiction to any nation. It speaks rather for the existence of higher and nobler feelings, among early races, than we are prone to credit them with, that such feelings, side by side with abject fear, should have sought embodiment in genii.

The evil-spirit faith of Korea is one of the many forms of that body of superstition which is common in essentials, though differing in details, to the whole eastern coast of Asia, — from

Siam, on the south, to Kamchatka, on the north. It is man's first attempt to account for all those ills which are his birthright. But it is not so much an explanation as an instinctive inference. The tempest, the earthquake, the thunder, and the lightning are exhibitions of forces he cannot understand. They frighten, they kill him, without his being in the least able to foretell their coming. But, worse than all these, is insidious disease. In the morning he is well, and life opens out before him one long vista of happiness; and at eve he is at death's door, and he cannot tell why. Misfortunes seem to come upon him designedly, like the acts of some great distinct free-will, so different do they appear from the ordinary, orderly course of Nature. To his mind, only beings in some sort like himself, though vastly more potent, could cause such things; and so he peoples the air with them, and then guards himself against their attacks as best he can devise.

The existence to-day in Korea of such a faith, as a still living belief, is, in the first place, interesting in itself. For the Koreans are no savage tribe; they passed from the childhood of hobgoblins and nightmares to the manhood of common sense as long ago as we did ourselves. The phantasms of fear gave place to the rule of reason there, as here. With them, as with us, religion supplanted superstition. But among them, as hardly with a parallel elsewhere, the career of religion was peculiar; it went as suddenly as it had come, and left them with nothing but the old superstitions to fall back upon.

Why it went, we have seen in the preceding chapter; and its loss produced its inevitable results. When a belief rational and pure enough to be called a religion disappears, the stronger minds among the community turn in self-reliance to a belief in nothing; the weaker, in despair, to a belief in anything. This happened here; and the anything to which they turned in this

case was what had never quite died out, the old aboriginal demon worship.

What that was exactly, is, in detail, peculiar to Korea. It consisted for the most part in the belief in a host of malevolent spirits, who, though invisible, made their presence no less potently felt in other ways. No better method of introducing these spirits to the reader suggests itself to me, than the way I myself made their acquaintance. It was certainly calculated to be impressive.

Probably the first thing to catch your eye, if you stood before one of the royal buildings, whether it were palace, pavilion, or pyre, would be a row of bronze figures squatting in Indian file on the ridges below the gables. Your first glance would suggest a pack of mischievous boys in the hazardous act of sliding down the roof. A second look would show them to be sitting regardant; but so precarious is their position, and so lifelike their attitude, that you almost expect them to move, in spite of the evidence of your senses to their inability to do so. To call them simply grotesque would be to belittle them by too faint praise. They are the very incarnation of absurdity, as they are meant to be the impersonation of the hideous. The procession — to use what still seems, in spite of their fixity, the most appropriate word — is headed by an animal that looks like a monkey, and is called a Sonokong, seated on his haunches, with his arms akimbo, as if he were impertinently quizzing the passers-by from his safe vantage-ground. Behind him squats a figure suggestive of a pig, rather more stolid and indifferent than the first, and also, if possible, uglier. Behind him is another pig; and so they go tailing up the ridge. The weather has not been over-gentle with the brutes, and has done its best to increase their original repulsiveness. It has thus furthered man's intention, for the beasts are spirit scarecrows. They were placed in their guardian position in order to

frighten away the evil spirits, the spirits of misfortune and disease. With such repulsiveness on the roof, disease and misfortune dare not enter the door.

The evil spirits are a sort of impersonation of ill-luck. They are forever wandering about, and seeking a baneful intimacy with frail mortality. They people the air, and until self-domesticated, show no inclination for terrestrial life, as did the ancient dryads, satyrs, and nymphs. They would seem to be innocuous in the open, but inside a house, in the unguarded freedom of the domestic circle, they become capable of any amount of harm. One of their most common noxious pursuits is as the bearers of disease. In fact, one is tempted to style the cult the worship of bacteria, — bacteria of the mind, body, and estate. In size, also, they suggest the like; for they are, for spirits, diminutive. They are considerably smaller than men. Indeed, considering that they are not supposed to be seen, we know their size with surprising accuracy from certain representations of fights they have had with mankind; for man is at times bold enough to attack them, and not without reason, apparently, as in such encounters the imps invariably figure as getting the worst of it. But then men drew the pictures.



THE CHINESE GENERAL AND THE UNFORTUNATE IMP.

There was one old Chinese general, in particular, who was famous for his fights with the spirits. In fact, his posthumous

reputation rests principally upon his unvarying success in this kind of warfare. He lived in a sort of middle distance of historical perspective, when war was still undertaken, according to the would-be romance of succeeding ages, against the powers of darkness, and men had not yet been obliged to turn their hands so exclusively to slaying one another to earn a fame for prowess. He has since become a favorite subject in pictorial art. One of his portraits, which I happen to own, depicts him on his return home from a successful fray. He has collared his demon, and is dragging him along much as a policeman walks off a small boy to the police station. The poor little imp looks innocent enough to suggest that here, as elsewhere, the minion of the law has got hold of the wrong boy.

It is certainly not in strength that the imps excel, but rather in cunning and virulence. They are also, most fortunately for their possible victims, surprisingly timid. If they were not, the human part of the community would assuredly have to migrate, for they are unpleasantly plenty. But though wily in character, they are not sagacious in mind; in fact, they are simplicity itself. The very clumsiest of devices serves to terrify them. The average bird must be considerably more astute than they, judging from the things at which they take affright. No passably clever crow but learns in a day or two that a scarecrow is a sham, but centuries of association have failed to impress the impish mind with the vanity of the beasts upon the roof.

Their endeavors seem to be directed to gaining an access to the houses. Here again we are tempted to class them as a tolerably perfect germ theory. The fresh air is not favorable to their proper working. They become dangerous only in the impure atmosphere of a room. Having effected an entrance to the house, they then best attack the person. Perhaps there is an affinity here in their action to the belief of possession by

evil spirits, current among the ancient Hebrews, though such possession is rather implied than expressed. As it is apparently impossible to protect the person when once the demons have entered the house, the ingenuity of mankind is directed to the devising of means to deter them from entering their abodes; this, thanks to the timidity and gullibility of the assailants, is not a difficult matter. It would appear that the most efficacious means are the fanciful beasts on the roof. On the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, the representations of imaginary monsters should perhaps be the best protection against imaginary foes. Time has not familiarized them in the least with the sight; and the defence may be considered as complete, for the buildings seemed to me to be as devoid of spirits as they were of any other furnishing. To the people generally, there is a slight drawback to its efficaciousness, in that they are not permitted to employ it. Such guardians are solely the perquisite of his Majesty; common houses have to shift without them. The reason is, that it is a crime to be like the king in anything; and as his Majesty takes the first choice in all inventions or discoveries, the rest of the Korean world has to get along as best it may with the second.

The beasts on the roof are not the only artifices in vogue to keep out the vagrant goblins. Fortunately for the welfare of the community, others have been found not inconducive to the same result, — practices which, not being to the royal fancy, have become, by elimination, the property of the people. Upon the outer portal of the better class of Korean houses, on the streetward side of the panels of the double door, are posted what look not unlike theatrical placards. They are colored paper drawings, and they represent two ancient generals, — the one Korean, the other Chinese. Though to our eye they suggest a coming display of histrionic talent, there is nothing theatrical in the native intent. They are not addressed to

men, but to the spirits; and their purpose is not to allure, but to repel. One of the two is the general above mentioned.

This contrivance is rather a privilege of the nobility. The common people are content to fasten upon the lintel of their door a wisp of rice-straw or a strip of cloth. The higher classes having used up terror as a safeguard, the poorer have to put up with deception, to try and catch the imp by his failings. The rice-straw is to pander to the greediness of the ghoul; the shred of cloth to delude him into the belief that the man himself is there. As it once formed a part of his garment, the ghoul is supposed to be simple enough to believe that it still does.

Both the paintings on the gates and the offerings on the lintels are very common in Söul, and you can hardly pass along any street in the capital without seeing several.

There is another custom in connection with the warding off of the evil spirits, which is as pretty in its expression as most of the others are grotesque. It is unlike them, also, in another way, for it is not a permanent protection. It is a rite, performed on a particular occasion, and only once a year. I was witness of it, by accident, one afternoon, and I admired its poetry before I learnt its purpose. It was on the Korean New Year's eve, a month later than our own. In the twilight of a snowstorm, I had started to walk across the city; all day it had been snowing, but now that the day was dying, the weather, remorseful, seemed trying to forget its sullen mood in a parting smile. But repentance had come too late; and the sunset light now only succeeded in tingeing the leaden canopy a faint, lurid red, which the freshly fallen snow reflected back. It was an unreal light, this afterglow, as it struggled with the deepening gloom. Few people were abroad; and even the speech of such groups as stood gossiping here and there seemed hushed of itself to whispers, as it stole to my ear, muffled by the

snow. My very footfall was lost in the thick, soft carpet that covered the path. Against such a sombre, silent background there shone out, with all the more vividness, at intervals in the street before the doors of the houses, tiny tongues of flame. They sprang from little bonfires in the midst of the snow, which men, as silent as the time itself, stood tending. The men uttered no sound, and their whole bearing was subdued by the scene into an unearthly quiet; farther on, a group of children, gathered in a circle about the flame, sat mutely intent on its flickerings, while its light dyed their gaudy dresses yet ruddier, and touched the eager young faces with its fancy-begetting glow. Like the ruby flame at the heart of a Roman Catholic cathedral shrine, it seemed the only living thing in one vast gloom.

Slight knowledge always tends to destroy the quaint. On returning home, my first inquiries about what I had seen elicited worse than a prosaic explanation. I had witnessed, so I was informed, the annual domestic hair-burning. During the year the hair combings and cuttings of each household are carefully kept and put aside, and then, on a certain night, the whole collection is brought out and burnt, once for all. Whether this is, as some say, from a superstitious aversion to the burning oftener than is absolutely necessary of what has been a part of man, or whether, as others suggest, for the more simple reason that the odor of burning hair is too disagreeable to be often repeated, — is uncertain. At any rate, this refuse of the Korean scanty toilet is punctiliously preserved during the entire twelve months, and then solemnly consumed on that day, when all things begin anew.

As this did not satisfy my sense of poetic justice, I inquired further of my official visitor, the secretary, a man deep in native folk-lore. Nor was I disappointed. The rite was, indeed, too picturesque not to have a soul. This is what he told me.

Some of earth's customs are but the reflection of those in heaven. There is a New Year's day there, as here. It dawns the same to both, for one surrounds the other.[1] Upon it all the good spirits — and their punctual attendance at this annual reception is one of the few mentions made of the virtuous nonentities — call upon the Lord of heaven, as men call upon the king on earth. While they are so engaged, the evil spirits, — the spirits of disease and misfortune, — not being expected at the entertainment, are left to their own devices, and having nowhere else to go, descend from the sky to annoy and pester mankind. It is to prevent them from entering their abodes that men kindle in front of them the tiny bonfires. The objects of so much excluding care bear the suggestive name of "floating and attaching devils."

So numerous and active a host of deities would seem worthy the tribute of some shrine; but they have none, unless a jail may by antithesis be supposed to take its place.

You cannot travel far on any Korean road without passing one of these jails. It is in the form of an ancient tree around whose base lies piled a heap of stones. The tree is sacred; superstition has preserved it, where most of its fellows have gone to feed the subterranean ovens. It is not usually very large, nor does it look extremely venerable, so that it is at least open to suspicion that its sanctity is an honor which is passed along from oak to acorn or from pine to seed. However, it is usually a fair specimen of a tree, and where there are few others to vie with it, comes out finely by comparison. Otherwise there is nothing distinctive about the tree, except that it exists, — that it is not cut down and borne off to the city on the

[1] Yu Kil Chun, a Korean, used to have discussions with his brother as to whether, by climbing a mountain, you got nearer heaven. He held that you did not, not because he believed heaven to be very far off, but because he thought it to surround the earth with a uniform thickness, irrespective of the height from which it started, like some material covering, following the contours.

back of some bull, there to vanish in smoke. On its branches hang, commonly, a few old rags, evidently once of brilliantly colored cloth; they look to be shreds of the garments of such unwary travellers as approached too close. But a nearer inspection shows them to be tied on designedly. The heap of small stones piled around the base of the tree gives one the impression at first that the road is about to undergo repairs, which it sadly needs, and that the stones have been collected for the purpose. This, however, is a fallacy: no Korean road ever is repaired.

The spot is called Son Wang Don, or "The Home of the King of the Fairies." The stones help to form what was once a fairy temple, now a devil jail; and the strips of cloth are pieces of garments from those who believed themselves possessed of devils or feared lest they might become so. A man caught by an evil spirit exiles a part of his clothing to the branches of one of these trees, so as to delude the demon into attaching there.

The origin of the practice is handed down by legend as follows: In olden times, during one of the many wars with China, a certain Korean general found himself, on the very eve of battle, destitute of ammunition. Fortunately, he was well posted on the top of a mountain. In this trying situation he dreamed a dream. In his vision, a goddess appeared to him and showed him a heap of stones under a tree, which she informed him would do to throw down upon the heads of his assailants. In the morning he found the spot he had dreamt of, and then bade his army collect as many more stones, for the same purpose, as they could find. These they subsequently peppered the foe with, to such effect that he won the battle; whereupon he ordered collections of stones, like the one he had seen in his dream, to be made throughout the land, to be ready for any like emergencies in the future. With the pile of stones

was naturally associated the memory of the goddess. They came to be regarded as temples to her; and because of her good-will to men, they were fixed upon as most suitable places to which to exile the evil spirits. Thus they developed into devil jails.

The legend, or tale, goes on to state that the vision was a day-dream of victory, and that the supernatural part of it was invented by the general to realize his dream. He compassed his end; but the superstition, once started, rolled on through the ages by its own momentum.

This is a view of one half of the belief, the side of practice; and, as is consequent in superstition, this side has for the objects of its devotion the evil half of the heavenly beings. The good have their portion wholly in the theory of the matter. They are worshipped a little, but even this little is solely to obtain their aid against the demons. In other words, they are supplicated, but never adored. In number they are legion. They are, for the most part, heavenly, though many of them belong to earth. Compared with the devils, they are pleasingly indefinite, because the ideas they embody are not so concrete. Every one fears the lightning, but few can see the special potency of the abstract good. They are not represented, to my knowledge, as warring with the powers of darkness. In heaven apparently the earthly law is reversed, and right is might simply by virtue of being. They strike down bad men occasionally, but they leave the actual fighting with the demons to the ancient Chinese general. They are tolerably lazy; for they acquiesce in the existence of evil, unless specially importuned. They even so far forget their duty as to leave the earth at times destitute of its proper supply of rain. This is the most serious of omissions on their part, because productive of the direst of calamities to mankind; for upon a suitable quantity of water depends the rice-crop, and upon the rice-crop

depends the existence of man. In seasons of drought, therefore, the whole nation becomes deeply religious. Prayers throughout the land are made by the officials; and if of no avail, at last the king throws himself into the breach, and becomes a mediator, a suppliant to the gods in behalf of his people. Leaving his comfortable palace, he proceeds to a building erected somewhere out in the country for the purpose, and there he stays night and day in supplication upon the ground. Fortunately, in the nature of things, rain eventually follows a drought, so that at last he is enabled to leave his exceedingly painful position successful in his petitions. In the mean while the rice-crop is often ruined.

Intermediate between the virtuous and the vicious is a third class of spirits, that are neutral, — neutral, that is, as regards their moral qualities. They inhabit the earth, and are an inoffensive lot. They have no special reason to exist, but neither has man. To Korean ideas the one has as much *raison d'être* as the other. They pass their time much as he does, without the unpleasant necessity of having to earn their living. They frequent all sorts of places, but have a preference for mountains. Their life is one long Korean holiday. Some are more philosophic than others; and these are very good company, as the following story shows. Apart from its general information, the tale has particular interest, as being another form, from distant and hermit Korea, of the widespread myth of Rip Van Winkle and its kindred folk-lore. Much as we enjoy the legend of the Kaaterskills, it is, as we know, only an imported ivy from other walls of the past. Our European civilization in America is not yet old enough to have so beautiful an outgrowth. But in a land where the very tile-roofs are overgrown with grass, we can hardly be surprised at finding it. Thus it is that Korea, too, has its wanderer, who by accident exchanged the cycle of earth for the cycle of the spirits.

We mortals count our time from the rising of the sun to its setting. The gods, who know not darkness, have the summer for their noon, the winter for their night. A year of this world is a day of heaven.

There lived, once upon a time, a certain well-to-do countryman, whose business took him to the woods. He was a feller of timber, and in pursuit of his work he often went far into the mountains. All Koreans are fond of Nature, and this man was no exception to the rule; so, with his business as excuse and his love as incentive, he would ramble on into the virgin forest. One day he wandered farther than usual, and found himself at last some distance up the side of the mountain. Before him lay the peak, seemingly close; and under the impulse of that species of folly which urges men to go to the top of anything lofty, in spite of their better judgment and repeated experience that the end never justifies the means, he climbed it. When at last he reached the summit, he found there four old men busily intent on a game of go.[1] They were seated, squatting in a circle, the go-board in their midst, while around them on the grass lay flagons of sul, and a page sat hard by to replenish their cups as they were emptied. The four looked up as he approached, bowed with great civility, and observing that he was tired, ordered the page to pour him out some sul. He sat down, sipped the sul, and looked on at the game. After tarrying what seemed but a short time in such agreeable company, he rose to take his leave. They bade him good-by with as much courtesy as they had welcomed him, and he started down the mountain. He descended without accident, and reached the bottom in much less time than it had taken him to go up. Mindful of his wife and children, he struck out for home, and arrived there in safety before sunset. On

[1] Our gobang is derived, though much modified, from this game. The name is probably taken from "go ban," which means "the go-board."

entering his own abode, he was somewhat surprised to find the place occupied by people he had never seen. What was worse, they ordered him off the premises as an intruder. He remonstrated at being thus turned out of his own house; and in the altercation that ensued, the master of the place came out from an inner room to see what was going on. He was a man well on in life, and yet the woodman never remembered to have laid



A TEA-FIGHT OF GNOMES.

eyes on him before. Appealing to him, however, for redress, the woodman was asked his name, and on giving it, the man replied that such was his first name, too.[1] On further questioning, it turned out that the present incumbent was the woodman's own grandson. The wanderer had come back to another world. His wife had long since died, his children all were buried; most of their children, too, had passed away, and his

[1] In Korea, the first name is equivalent to our last name.

great-grandchildren had grown up to manhood. He had been gone one hundred years.

Whether the spirits be good, bad, or indifferent, they all equally share the misfortune of being ordinary. In all mythologies the gods are not over far removed in dignity from their worshippers. The gulf between adorers and adored widens with the civilization of the race. But still there is a certain degree of nobleness and almost grandeur in the products of Aryan mythology. With far-Eastern gods, on the other hand, there is a striking amount of very average humanity in their composition; and this is all the more glaring because of the contrast of a childish faith with a maturer civilization.

The evil-spirit faith of Korea is, I think, related to the Shinto faith of Japan. The two differ now, it is true, considerably in detail, but both are probably only forms of the common aboriginal superstitions. There is one point, that is suggestive, in which the two have agreed from the earliest times. They alike worship the earthly ruler as divine. But there is a line drawn in Korea which does not exist in Japan, between what exists in the flesh and what is entirely heavenly. In the peninsula the worship of heavenly spirits is a perquisite of royalty. The king worships the spirits, and the common people worship him. This is considered sufficiently near for them to approach their gods. It is not the only faith in which stepping-stones are deemed necessary.

But there are certain exceptions. Every one, for instance, is allowed to have his "household spirit of earth." This is a pure Korean spirit. The conception is as native as the identity. Every part of the surface of the land, according to Korean notions, has its spirit; but so long as the spot remains uninhabited, the spirit has nothing to do with man. As soon, however, as a man settles in the place, the spirit becomes a sort of lar,

or household god, and requires to be recognized and worshipped. Though the spirit is indigenous to the soil, and of its essence, as it were, he is not in the least space-defined; that is, he does not belong to the land as a whole rather than to any, the smallest part of it. He is as indefinite as space itself. He is the many in one. It is a subtle conception. If, for instance, one man owns ten acres of land, he worships a single spirit brooding over the ten acres of ground. But if two men subsequently buy the same land, each at once begins to worship a spirit of his own, and not half of the previous man's *genius loci*.

The king worships the spirit for the whole land. The people pray to this spirit; but they erect no altar to him, as he is not more in one place than in another.

There is another spirit vouchsafed to the adoration of the people. He is known as "The Blesser of Children." He is sent by the supreme spirit to every house in Korea, to protect the children from the devils who try to lure away the little ones in order to make of them their own successors. If this is the way the demon company is recruited, their simplicity becomes more explicable.

One of the most ingenious of the spirits is "The Purveyor to Tigers Spirit." He frequents the mountains, because the tiger himself does. After a tiger has eaten a man, he makes use of the soul of the devoured as a means to provide himself with another meal. As he has assimilated the body, so for a time he owns the soul. So he sends it out to loiter on the mountain-paths until it falls in with some man who chances to pass that way. Then by subtle mental spells it lures him off the path into the thickets. The man suddenly feels thirsty, and imagines that he hears water; or he feels tired, and thinks he spies a tempting spot among the trees where he can lie down. He wanders away into the unfrequented woods, and is surprised,

killed, and eaten by the tiger. The soul of the first victim is then released from its bondage, and the soul of the second takes its place.

There are two classes of spirits which possess a special interest. They may be called historical spirits; for they are those which have to do with the history of the land, and those which are connected with the history of its rulers.

The earliest of the myths about Korea represent the land as a fairy land, — the home of the spirit of longevity and his companions. They lived there because of the beauty of the mountains and the lakes, so the present inhabitants say. They dwelt principally upon three lofty peaks, — Ha La, in the island of Quelpart; Kun Gan, or "The Precious Stone;" and Tè Pek San, or "The Great White Mountain." An ancient emperor of China, it is said, once tried to catch one of these fairies of longevity at the time when they still dwelt in the Middle Kingdom, if perchance from them he might obtain the elixir of life, and continue, though a mortal, to exist forever. He failed to take captive the spirit; but he so frightened them all that they fled to the East and settled upon the three mountains. Though these were their earthly homes, their home also was in the sky. They descended to earth to revel in the forests; and when for the time satiated with pleasure, they returned again to heaven.

As yet the land was nameless. A name came to it with the next myth. A long while ago — the Korean guess of three thousand years will do as well as another date — a certain spirit called Tan Kun, or "The Lord of the Oak-tree," descended from Tè Pek San, and made himself ruler of the country. He called it Chosön, or "The Land of the Morning Calm." If the spirit spoke Korean, he named it Achim Kohun. All we know is that when, later, Chinese came to be the language of literature, the name was Sinicized into Chosön. In

contrast with the spirits of longevity, Tan Kun is described as a true or real spirit. He is known to-day among the masses rather as a spiritual man than as a manlike spirit. The common people firmly believe him to have lived upon this earth. But such was not his original character. As being, after all, more tangible than his predecessors, he is singled out as the father of history. In the far-East the only thing of importance in such historical assertions is that the farther off the person, the more desirable he is as an historical character. The existence of proof, or the want of it, is quite an unnecessary consideration.

From what we know of the migrations of those races which peopled the peninsula, we can trace the thread of truth running through this web of fiction. These races came from beyond the ranges to the north and west which culminate in Pek Tu San, or "The Ever White Mountain," and thence travelled to the south and east.

The idea, not only of a rule by divine right but of a right to rule by divine origin, is one of the fundamental tenets of far-Eastern royalty. The next myths that we meet with have therefore to do with the ancestors of the dynasties that in their day have governed the land.

After the reign of innumerable petty princes, — three thousand they are roughly reputed to have been, — the country was divided into three large portions. Three houses had swallowed up all the rest. One day the king of one of these was walking in a wood, when his attention was attracted by a magpie cawing as if he were the mouthpiece of some great excitement. Following up the bird, he saw in the thicket what looked like a golden calf. He pushed the twigs aside, peered in, and discovered a box, which he took back with him to the palace. He then summoned his spouse, told her the story, and the two together opened the box. To their great

surprise they found inside of it an egg of pure gold. Being superstitious, the king was afraid of it, and was minded to get rid of the box by throwing it into some running water or burning it up. But the queen, a more rational soul, persuaded him to keep it as a curiosity. They accordingly put the thing aside, and on going stealthily to look at it the next day, found in its place a boy. He was precocious, and had already acquired the use of his tongue, for he at once called the king "father." He informed him that he was the son of a spirit, and had been sent by his spirit parent to be the king's successor. This annoyed and disturbed his Majesty, who at once suspected him to be some demon disguised. But the queen again came to the rescue, and interceded for the child. He was accordingly suffered to grow up, — a feat he accomplished so successfully, and in the course of which he developed so much intelligence, that the king gradually came to love him too, and at his death appointed him his successor to the throne of Sinra, as his kingdom was called, according as the boy had foretold. His name became Kim (meaning "gold"); and he was the ancestor of all the present Kims, who are to-day one of the most noted families of Korea. They remained the kings of Sinra till that kingdom was conquered by its neighbor Koryö; and though no longer royal, they have been powerful nobles ever since.

There are many such tales; they form a sort of royal folklore. Just as families ennobled to-day think it necessary to discover, by hook or by crook, some immemorial coat of arms, so the royal houses esteemed it absolutely necessary to trace their lineage to spirits. They are very particular about it, because it is, as it were, the sanction to their position. They also guard it, once obtained, with very jealous care. Their daughters are never allowed to marry common people; they can only form alliances with such as also have spirit blood in their veins.

There is another tale of similar construction in regard to the origin of the ruling house of the kingdom of Koryö. This kingdom, at first coexistent with the other two, eventually swallowed them both, and gave its name to the whole peninsula. This story, unlike the last, is not a tale of a supplanting dynasty, but of an original stock. The first king of Koryö was the descendant of a dragon. An old dragon, apparently wearied with being a dragon, changed himself, for variety's sake, into a very handsome man, ascended to heaven, and there married the daughter of a god. After the wedding he took his bride down to Koryö, where they lived together after the fashion of men. In this pleasant land of their honeymoon the days slipped away till, in due course of time, a son was born to the couple; whereupon they both took it into their heads to die, leaving the child to the care of a neighbor. Just before his death the dragon endowed his son with a name, Wang, which signifies "king," conjuring his neighbor at the same time not to reveal to a soul the boy's name nor his descent. If he kept the secret he would be blessed; otherwise he would assuredly be punished. So speaking, both the dragon and his wife vanished, to take on some other shape, probably not having found human existence as agreeable in practice as they had imagined it to be. The son, whose secret was sufficiently preserved, accomplished his destiny. Though personally he never amounted to much, his son in due time gathered about him a band of followers, conquered Koryö, and eventually became master of the whole land.

CHAPTER XXI.

SÖUL BY DAY.

OF the two essential properties that commend any method of conveyance, speed and bodily comfort, neither, to our notions, is a conspicuous feature of the Korean palanquin. Though the coolies who carry it do contrive to shuffle along a trifle faster than one would care to walk, the slight gain in speed is more than offset to foreign legs by the torture required to endure it. In consequence of this failure of the machine to keep its implied promises, and thus to justify in my eyes its existence, I dismissed it as an imposing sham, and chose, where possible, to sacrifice even etiquette to comfort, and walk instead. Such irrational conduct on my part greatly disturbed the good Colonel at first; but finding my aversion as intense as it was bigoted, and perceiving his protests vain to shake my determination, he finally desisted from his attempts at dissuasion, doubtless comforting himself with the reflection that in a temperament where all was so odd, one idiosyncrasy the more could make no difference. It was especially in expeditions across the city that I thus travelled *al fresco*.

In these walks I suffered little annoyance from inquisitiveness. In motion lay safety. Few of the idlers in the streets cared to indulge their curiosity at the cost of the exertion necessary to keep up. But if, in an unguarded moment, I paused, I became at once a centre of observation. A crowd

collected, with an alacrity suggestive of premeditation, as if its members had been simply waiting to settle, and continued to grow till it impeded travel and in aggravated instances forced many innocent citizens, no doubt against their will, to become implicated accessories. There was not even the hypocrisy of intention in the behavior of these self-invited spectators, practised in Japan. They stopped in simple directness of purpose to gaze at me, and as yet saw little necessity to seem to be observing something else.

Under normal conditions the streets were in one respect well suited for walking. The chief part of the travel was done on foot. There being no carriages and very rarely a horse, one was not obliged to keep a sharp lookout not to be run down, but could indulge in the unwonted luxury of strolling along, oblivious of his fellow-travellers, and drinking in with the eyes the panorama, quite regardless of any possible rude awakening. Practically the only occupants of the street, except the pedestrians, were palanquins and bulls of burden, and the pace of the latter was even slower than one's own.

In other respects the streets, it must be confessed, were not particularly adapted to their purpose. They bore the appearance, like the country roads, of having grown to be what they were. With the exception of the gutter-moats, they seemed to be simply aboriginal space; and I am unable to recall ever having witnessed any work whatever bestowed upon them. In dry times they did well enough; but in rainy weather they degenerated into sloughs, and people took to making for themselves a path within the path. Especially after a heavy snowfall the effect was unique. Fortunately for the rest of the world, several of the idlers embraced that occasion to stay at home. Of such persons as did venture abroad, nobody had a desire to walk in the snow; so each followed his predecessor in Indian file, that he might avail himself of former footsteps, and

the highway degenerated, for the time being, into a trail that wound about here and there in most arbitrary meanderings, the stereotyped whim of the first passer, across a level breadth of virgin white.

A few of the main streets had been laid out with a view to directness, and were passably straight. As for the others, they were delightfully crooked; so that before you knew them individually, you had very little notion, on venturing into a new one, where you would eventually turn up. The spirit of investigation procured me several valuable topographical discoveries. But I will secretly confess that I never succeeded in finding what I especially sought, — short cuts. The objection to these lay in the fact that the path was pretty sure to end in somebody's back-yard, whence escape, short of ignominiously retracing your steps, led you up over a stone wall and down into some other quiet individual's secluded garden. The easiest way to reach your destination was to pay little or no attention to direction, but to be sure to stick to the broad road. A knowledge of one's Söul only strengthened this instinct into a habit.

On a clear day in winter — and about half the days are clear — the view from any of the broader city streets is most beautiful. The houses are so low and the mountains so high that in the main thoroughfares the peaks can be seen towering above the roofs on either hand, as you pass along the street. Even in the narrower alleys they block the ends of the vistas in front and behind. They stand out bold and sharp against the blue, covered with the brilliantly white snow, while the north wind falls fresh and keen upon the city from over their tops. In spite of its cold, it is a highly esteemed wind in Söul, for it is the great kite-flying wind. Here and there, gathered in favorable positions, you come across groups of men and boys standing gazing up into the sky. Oftener than not, they

stand right in the middle of the highway; and other people, as they pass the spot, turn aside for the gazers, as a matter of course. The first time I came upon these star-gazers in broad daylight, who treated their fellow-mortals so cavalierly and received such a tribute of consideration in return, I was at a loss to comprehend the cause of their rapt and respected attention. But on looking in the same direction myself, I saw far up a rectangle of paper sailing across the blue. And then, as my glance wandered, I discovered another and then another, and away off in the distance still others, hovering over the roofs of the city like great white birds. As they are not wholly white, but in part colored, there was at intervals a momentary flash of red or blue or brown to the distant sheen as the kites turned in the air. Sometimes they soared alone in solitary grandeur; sometimes they flew in pairs, and the two hovered about each other like a couple of angry birds. This betokened a kite-fight. Two kites are flown near each other, and then each so handled that the strings shall be brought to intersect. Then, by adroit manœuvring, each tries by rubbing against it to cut the other's string, until one succeeds. The severed kite falls fluttering to earth, while the victor, relieved from the strain, rises with a mocking toss of triumph yet higher into the air. There is so much skill involved in the manner in which one string may be made to cut the adversary's without being parted itself, that it demands the appreciative sympathy of a large concourse of do-nothings, who completely surround the kite-flier and gaze, open-mouthed, up into the sky, utterly oblivious of aught else.

The kind of kite in favor is very simple in construction and equally plain in ornament. It quite lacks the elaborate grotesqueness that makes of the Chinese and Japanese varieties such superbly hideous objects. It is rectangular and tailless, and it never attains any very great size. Its one beauty

consists in being symmetrically party-colored, like a harlequin or a convict. But it flies just as well as more decorated specimens of its class. Boys are not suffered to monopolize the pastime. Men engage in it with equal enthusiasm, and kite-flying is a taste which is never outgrown. January, on account of the prevalence then of the north wind, is the great kite-flying month.

Sharing with these grown-up toys the heavens above the city, is a second species of kite, — this time not apparent but real birds. Like the turkey-buzzards of other climes, they are the scavengers of the town; or, more exactly, they share this disagreeable duty with the dogs. They contrast well with the human inventions of the same name, their great motionless dusky wings wheeling them round in stately circles. Though no one would think of molesting them, they rarely descend to the streets, except on sudden swoops; and the houses are so low that they seldom roost on the roofs. They select from preference the trees, of which there are many in the gardens that lie scattered through the city. Wherever there happens to be a group of these, the kites congregate, and at dusk the branches will be covered thick with birds perching on them. The branches serve also for resting-places to the other kind of kites, — unfortunate specimens of their species which, having got entangled there among the twigs, are left to perish by their former owners. The shreds, worn to differing degrees of ghastliness by the weather, hang, pathetic pendants, side by side with the remains of last year's nests.

There is one other place that is a great favorite with the birds. It is a certain double gibbet-like structure, painted a bright red; and it stands just off one of the main streets, at the entrance to another narrower thoroughfare. It is a magnificent post of observation for a kite; and I rarely passed under it, and over its ghastly, ghost-like shadow lying

there black across the sunlit path, without seeing the silhouette of a bird projecting beyond the shade of the cross-bar; and instinctively turning and looking up, there, on the upper transverse beam, was perched the motionless body of a kite, to all appearance sunk in lazy drowsiness, but whose winking eye nothing escaped.

Söul is, in all respects but one, the most sombre city I have ever beheld, and in that one trait the brightest. This single exception to the universal gloom is in the matter of dress. But even this exception is essentially superficial; the color of the garment having in no wise sunk in to tinge the character of those who wear it. At a distance, where the look of the face is second to the effect of the figure, the faintly bluish-white tunics lend an apparent gayety to the street. But on a nearer approach the quiet, sedate expression of the people tends to dispel the illusion. Except for this one touch of brightness, all is preternaturally sombre.

In the first place, the houses are devoid of windows, except of the most rudimentary description. In the side streets the effect is forbidding in the extreme. On either hand are long lines of wall, protected in front by the little gutter-moats and capped with a roofing of tiles. Though they scarcely look it, they are the sides of houses. Except for a few loopholes close under the eaves, they are indistinguishable from walls proper; for all walls in Korea are as thoroughly roofed as the houses themselves. These loopholes are small square apertures, fitted with small sliding screens of paper. On the outside are not infrequently iron gratings. Only at intervals in the long line of stone some gateway breaks the pitiless exclusion, and then but to yield at best a melancholy glimpse into an empty courtyard.

In the second place, the Koreans are not a shop-keeping people. Shops are few in number, and deficient in kind. No

wonder they are; as, even as it is, those who sell seem to be far in excess of those who buy. Trade is not one of the mainsprings to action in the men, and woman from her position has never tasted the delights of shopping. Unfortunately for the shops, it is not true there that judiciously to spend money is her business; injudiciously, her pleasure. This reduces the shops themselves to the unattractive minimum of the necessary. In default of panes of glass large enough, the whole side of the house toward the street lies open, and one room is given up to displaying the goods. In consequence, in winter the business of shopkeeping is cold work; and those whose wares are in the least danger of being bought sit in a tiny den behind, from which, through a small bit of glass, they keep an eye on the objects in front. But such luxury is the exception, not the rule. Habit, of both kinds, is usually sufficient protection to the shopkeepers in their day-long vigil.

The wider streets are the ones most occupied by such shops as there are. This is due to the fact that the streets are not common meeting-grounds, but simply passage-ways, and are slighted accordingly. Only the very lowest order of houses front on them; those of the better class standing in dignified seclusion, each in the centre of its own courtyard. So the sides of the streets, spurned by aristocratic dwelling-houses, have yielded themselves, where they have yielded at all, to the purposes of shops. This custom is one common also to China and Japan.

There is no lack of traffic in the streets. Some of them are positively thronged with men. What so many wanderers are about I have never been able satisfactorily to determine. It is not *loafing*, pure and simple. From their actions I feel convinced that each has an object present to his mind, though he does not suffer it to disturb his pleasure; for no one ever seemed to be in the least inconvenienced by pausing in his walk to stop

and stare for an indefinite period at anything which happened to strike his attention. This applies only to the common people. Occasionally some official is borne through the crowd in his palanquin, preceded, surrounded, and followed by a retinue of servants at a fast walk, giving one the *whish* of passing hurry; but, then, it is a part of the business of officials everywhere to seem as busy as possible. The governed always like to be reminded of the labor involved in the task of governing them.

What traffic there is, is mostly very local. In the winter months fire and water ought to be the patron gods of the business, for they are the causes of nine tenths of it. Thales would have experienced little difficulty in enforcing the cult of his noumena, however he might have succeeded in inculcating his principles. Bulls, almost smothered under their loads of brushwood, stream incessantly into the city, and depart again later in long files unladen. Men rendered nearly invisible by their burdens move along under huge towering hods filled with the same material. Both man and beast proceed with lofty disregard of other wayfarers, whose duty it is to get out of the way. The same individual indifference, begotten of weight, is a characteristic of the water-bearers. A couple of pails slung on either end of a yoke across the shoulders seem by their momentum to urge the carriers rather than to be carried themselves. Filled to the brim at the well, the water swashes about till enough has been spilled to lower it to the safety level, and in so doing leaves behind it a frozen trail of icy mound.

The wells, from which the carriers draw, are among the most picturesque objects in the city. They stand in out-of-the-way corners of the streets, just off the current of travel, at once in the highway and yet out of it. They are built of stone blocks, set in a circle, and their rims rise a couple of feet above the surrounding ground, which the constant coming of many feet has

raised a little from the highway to meet them. There is no hour set apart for drawing water. The wells are placed so near those who use them that all hours are equally good, so that throughout the day a long concourse of people — professional carriers and household women servants — constantly come and go. Around them alone is it commonly possible to see a woman's face, unless, indeed, you chance to pass a stream during a clothes-washing. For these two occupations the female servants habitually go abroad; but as they are necessities of their calling, no one is supposed to notice the fact.

Nearly in the centre of the town stands the great bell. It is a large bell, even for far-Eastern bells, and occupies the whole of a building placed at the meeting of two important cross-roads. Its importance is quite in keeping with its situation and size; for by it are regulated all the municipal observances, or more properly all those laws to which the city is subjected, — for in the restrictions, of which the appointed time is announced by the solemn sound of the great bell, the city has no say whatever. Ordinarily the bell is quiescent enough during the day, and only awakes to activity at night.

The streets as they meet here open out into a sort of square, which, from its breadth and central position, becomes the most frequented spot in the town. It is used, among other purposes, for a brushwood market. Bulls waiting to be freed from their burden stand untethered as patiently as one could wish. Kind treatment and familiarity for ages with man have rendered them as docile as oxen. Next to them are lines of booths, where the smaller articles of daily use or simple vanity court such as from employment or curiosity frequent the square. Side by side with these are fruit-stands, or perhaps more appropriately nut-stands; for the fruits of Korea are nothing to speak of, while its nuts are exceptionally fine. Oranges, dried persimmons, pears that look like russet apples and are as hard and

tasteless as potatoes, chestnuts, walnuts, and pinenuts are among the commonest kinds offered for sale. The most interesting point about the stands is the systematic way in which the fruits are arranged. Each of these, according to its kind, is gathered into little heaps. So symmetrical are the heaps that my curiosity was at once piqued into counting them; and on doing so, I discovered that each heap contained exactly the same number of units as its fellows of the same kind of fruit. Three chestnuts went invariably to a pile, seven walnuts to another, and so on, the nuts increasing in number as they decreased in size. Each pile was for sale for half a farthing. There was something almost pathetic in the thought of the anxious labor that had so carefully arranged beforehand these little heaps, destined for so long to court a customer in vain.

Intersecting the city are several dry beds of streams. In the season of the spring rains there is actually some water in them, but during the larger part of the year the greater number are quite empty. They are spanned, however, wherever a street crosses them, by stone bridges; and these bridges are the only ones in the land. This seems incongruous at first; for in Korea a river which is a river is never honored or disgraced, according to which way you take it, by a bridge of any kind. The paradox is defensible, however, for two reasons: the greater wealth and dignity of the capital is one cause; and the fact that a stream, which is at times a stream and at times not, is more troublesome than something which is either one thing or the other, is another reason for the apparent incongruity of custom. A ford is even more primitive than a ferry, and a long bridge is, after all, more expensive than a small one. As for the matter of expense, these bridges must cost very little; for, once built, they are left to their own unaided powers to continue. They are so solid, from the large stone blocks of which they are made, that they contrive not to

tumble through long after they should by rights have done so. Time has opened and then widened the seams between the blocks, and made unevennesses in places where a block has settled below its neighbors; but the human tide surges across the stones as safely as of old.

To the sights of a city belong, in one sense of the word, its sounds. I was one day picking my way between the ponds and mud-holes of one of the thoroughfares of Söul. In spite of the difficulty in doing so, and the consequent want of speed, the street was quite full, as usual, nor was it particularly quiet. The noise of the passing was entirely drowned, however, on turning a certain corner, by the hubbub that issued from a house across the way. The house was, in appearance, like all other houses, and showed to the street only a blank wall with the usual loopholes for windows. But from within came forth a very pandemonium of sound. The noise resembled the humming of a swarm of gigantic bees, and the place suggested a mammoth hive. "What on earth," said I to my attendant Kim, "can that Babel be?" But it turned out to be only a Korean school.

The fancy took me to play examiner. So I entered, followed by the good Kim, by the main gateway at one side of the house, into the courtyard, as much as possible as if it were a matter of every-day occurrence. But I was not suffered to enter thus quietly alone. An eager crowd pushed after me, not to see the school, but to gaze on me. As privacy is not a Korean demand, intrusion is not much of a Korean rudeness. This reflection, however, did not reconcile me to the situation, as I wished my uninvited visit to disturb the occupants as little as might be. The schoolmaster did not care. He was as indifferent to their coming as he was courteous in receiving me. But I objected, because with the least right to do so. I ordered them out, and with the help of Kim and the owners pushed

them all into the street and bolted the door. Then I sat me down on the threshold of learning, — that is, upon the broad sill that surrounds all Korean houses. I did not enter the seat of wisdom, partly because I was too lazy to remove the grosser covering of my understanding (my shoes), and partly because the place was quite full. It was an average-sized Korean room, some eight feet by fourteen; and ranged around it, facing the centre, sat eight pupils and the teacher. They were of all ages, down to nearly nought, and the most serious-looking lot of schoolboys imaginable, or rather unimaginable. They were, the entire company, as sedate, every whit, as the teacher. They all sat cross-legged, each with a book spread out before him on the mats. These books were of various kinds, from "The Thousand Character Classic" (the Korean as it is the Chinese primer), on through the true classics and numerous histories, to the "Yh King," — a manual of mystic philosophy, which dates from remote antiquity. My unexpected appearance made them all pause; but, the momentary excitement over, they returned with renewed assiduity to their books, and began again their humming, like a swarm of bees once more on the wing. It is allowable to read aloud; or rather any other method is unheard of. Each student hums to himself, his voice, now rising, now falling, in two different tones, so as to impart a sort of chanting character to the occupation. The sound affords them a continuous sense-gratification, in addition to the mental enjoyment they derive from the perusal of the book; and what they begin at school, they practise through life. It is the keeping ever of the crutches to learning. Dear old grandams, in out-of-the-way country districts, afford an excellent parallel. We all, indeed, begin in the same way; and some people, after they are grown up, still continue to pronounce to themselves as they read, though they have learned to be mute to the bystander.

This hum may be said to pervade the far-East. It is one of the characteristic sounds of any Japanese inn. In fact, no inn would seem truly complete without it. There are always sure to be staying in the house one or more persons who are given to reading. These persevering students lie flat on their stomachs or squat on their feet on the mats, and hum all day long. An irritated listener is inclined to believe that the word expresses also the substance of what they read. In Korea the custom is largely outgrown with years; and then, also, reading there is less generally an accomplishment throughout the community.

Though Japan is by no means a land of sounds, Korea is less so. Even the pipe of the "amma"[1] there is unheard.

[1] The Japanese "amma" is an itinerant massage-man, always blind, who walks the streets in search of customers, and gives notice of his approach by a certain set of notes, never varied, upon a short metal pipe. The sound is perhaps the most characteristic of the night noises of Japan.

CHAPTER XXII.

SÖUL BY NIGHT.

IT is midnight in Söul, — not the midnight of Paris, with its glare of street lamps, and its floods of light from *café* windows, but the silent starlight of a great walled city of the far-East fallen asleep. On earth there is neither light nor stir nor sound. Even that distant murmur of most great cities in the dead of night — the throb of its mighty heart — here has stopped. Man and his doings have seemingly passed away, and I am keeping vigil in my room alone.

Of a sudden, across the deathlike stillness comes the boom of the great bell. It cannot startle anything so dead; it only intensifies a silence it is powerless to dispel. There is something weird in it, as it finds me the only one to hearken to its sound. It marks, I know, the middle of the night; and then it is lost again in the universal hush. At intervals, as the hours come round, I can hear for a moment the tinkle of the watchman's bell, and the clank of his chains as he paces his beat within the courtyards; and then all is once more quiet, and the city seems its own vast tomb.

The great shadow we men call night, as it sweeps slowly but irresistibly around our globe, veiling the face of all things, must have been one of the first phenomena to teach man the narrow limit of his own powers. How awed he was, as darkness crept over him, how lost he felt in the long blackness of

night, we know from the joy with which, in the poems of the remote past, the return of the dawn is welcomed. Even after he had learned to predict the morrow, he was yet powerless to dispel the night. For ages he bowed before Nature; he acquiesced in his fate. It took him centuries before he learned to conquer it. The long night of the year may have taught him a way to free himself from the fetters of the night of the day; for it was, in all probability, a striving after warmth that gave him the clue to the means of making light. From that moment he was emancipated. He had learned to manufacture time; and having once discovered this means of artificially prolonging his life, — for it is not the number of hours we exist, but the sensations we crowd into them, that measure it, — he kept a firm hold on his elixir. We have since found many other such elixirs of life, — from our minds, not from matter, — such as poor Ponce de Leon sought for in vain; and threescore years and ten is a much longer time now than it was four thousand years ago. The far-East sips, if it does not drain, the potion; and the streets of Tokio or Canton in the early evening are, in their way, as brilliant as those of Paris or London become nine hours later. But with Söul it is different. While Tokio is spangled with lights and lanterns, Söul lies dark and silent as the tomb. It is not that her people have failed to discover, but that they are not permitted to enjoy. The official oligarchy wills it so.

That the Koreans do not borrow of the night as other nations have learned to do, — that, the gloaming gone, Pompeii in its ghastly moonlight is not more desolate than is Söul, — is due to a law as singular in its existence as it is striking in its effects. It bears a certain outward resemblance to the ancient curfew of England. At nightfall the massive wooden doors of the city gates, clad in their iron armor, are swung to; and from that time till dawn no one — man, woman, or child — is

allowed to pass the limit of his own threshold. The whole little world is forced to remain, each family separately, at home. The streets are deserted; any one found upon them is at once taken to the police station and flogged. From the restrictions of this law but two classes are exempted, — blind men and officials; and the latter made the law.

It was often my lot to have to cross the city late at night, and thus to witness in all its peculiarity the results of so strange a custom. From preference I usually walked; and there accompanied me in these journeyings only a single attendant to carry the lantern, without which in Korea no wanderer goes abroad after dark.

No sooner had I stepped over my own threshold than I was plunged at once into veritable outer darkness. The man in front with his lantern made me think of a ship at sea. There was a certain reason for the fancy; for the lantern, though at first necessary to my own sure footing, was in fact principally carried as a sign to others. Before me lay the inky blackness of the street. I could not see it; I knew it only by the void. On either hand the gaunt forms of the low houses loomed for a moment as I approached them, like silhouettes against the less black sky, and then sank again and disappeared once more in the indistinguishable gloom, — a city buried not in lava and ashes, but as completely in silence and night. Even my own footfall died away on the earth of the pathway, and found no place to echo in the irregularities of the low houses. Only now and then a dull rhythmical thud struck upon my ear. It sounded curiously like the croaking of frogs on some summer's eve, and it came apparently only from out the darkness and the night; as we advanced, it grew louder and louder, till at last we passed it by, off to one side. It seemed unearthly. I called to the lantern-bearer, bade him hearken, and asked him what it was. He listened, and then answered me that the noise came

from the pounding of clothes in the Korean method of washing. Even after this shockingly prosaic explanation there still lingered a weirdness in it, carried on thus at dead of night by unseen hands. Half groping my way along, — for the light from the lantern only lit up a few feet around, — I next stumbled over a dog, that sprang away growling into the shelter of a neighboring gateway.

Fixed beacons there were none, — no street lamps, — nothing to guide the stranger or help the native. One had to know well his city, before he ventured out at night. The few wanderers abroad carried each his own lantern, or had it carried before him, according to his rank; and these lanterns varied in size and shape in keeping with the station of the wanderer. Now they were solidly built frameworks, a foot and a half square, now delicate octagonal paper nothings hung upon a short stick and daintily held after the manner of a very short fishing-rod; but all were of the same fundamental description, — a tallow candle within a paper frame. Unfortunately they lack the brilliant colors which make an evening stroll in Tokio so beautiful. They are all of the same yellowish white, — the color of the plain, every-day paper through which they shine. The motion of the arm, as the bearers walk, causes them to dance about like so many fireflies. When you add to this that the men are all clad in loose-flowing white robes, revealing them as they approach in the orthodox ghostly sheen, they each resemble, armed with the lantern, something between Diogenes and his own apparition. Evidently I was not what they were in search of, however; for on my looming up before them, they started back with a half-uttered cry, as if our parts had been mutually interchanged. I am not sure but that they had the right of the superstition, if it comes to that. I do not know that *revenants* have any particular garb or color ascribed to them in the Korean spiritual world. All the tales

on the subject I ever heard, imply that they return in the form they wore here below. But assuredly a dark figure, above their average height, without a lantern or any such warning of his appoach, is more calculated to play the part than a sort of professional somnambulist in his nightdress, as we conceive the idea.

About half-way home one night, in mid-ocean of darkness, my man with the lantern was suddenly stopped. I happened to be a little ahead of him at the time. My impatience to be at home had caused me to ignore the lantern, — an obligatory but useless adjunct to the party. Still, it was more fitting to travel in company; so I turned to see how far behind he was, when, to my surprise, I saw that the man had met some one — friend or enemy — with whom he was mysteriously talking. The lanterns lit up so little of the men that the face of the stranger could not be seen, but from his actions matters seemed amicable enough. I waited; in a few moments the colloquy came to an end, and, the lantern-bearer catching up with me, I asked him what it all meant. It seemed he had been stopped by the night patrol and asked his business. The account he was able to give of himself, backed by my appearance in the distance, had saved him, and the officer of the law had allowed him to pass.

This was the extent of my acquaintance with the patrol. From the cursory way in which I thus saw him, I never learned to distinguish a patrol from any one else. Occasionally, as we passed some figure, my servant would turn to me and murmur, "There, that was one!" But he had already been swallowed up by the gloom. Still, I would not seem to suggest that a Korean could not tell a patrol as far away as he could see anything; for such a suggestion would be a libel upon the efficiency of the Korean police system. It is a fundamental tenet in far-Eastern matters of surveillance

that all possible opportunity to escape shall be offered the offender. They believe in making the deterrent effect precede as well as follow the commission of the crime. Not to catch the criminal is the first object; to punish him mercilessly if they fail, the second.

Under this nocturnal anti-peripatetic law, midnight traversing of the town, for such as have a right to indulge in it, is rendered peculiarly secure. I suppose there is no great city in the world so safe as Söul. Instead of your servant being a protection to you, it is you who protect him. In your company he is safe; without you he is liable to arrest and beating. This is in some sort the object of the law. It is thought expedient that all the common people shall remain within doors after dark; by this means thieving will be rendered impossible. If everybody is kept at home, the evilly disposed will, of necessity, be included. The plan works admirably in both directions: on the one hand, there are no thieves abroad; and on the other, all the houses are guarded.

The immunity belonging to officials descends to those executing their commands. You may, supposing you are an official, send your servant on any errands you see fit. In that case the messenger arms himself with a writing, describing what he is about, which he shows to any patrol who stops him, and is then suffered to proceed. The patrols summarily arrest any one who cannot show cause, either from position or permit, why he should be at large, and take him to the police station, where he is at once flogged. Five blows with a long flat pole are the penalty, *crescendo*. To avoid the annoyance of being arrested, under-officials, who run the danger of not being recognized at once, wear a species of badge to show on occasion.

There is another class in the community who are permitted freely to roam at night, — blind men. A thoughtful kindness

has given them an immunity they could never abuse. Unable to travel fast, they can easily be watched; and so blind men's holiday in Korea is prolonged from the twilight on till dawn. But their journeys are not confined to travel at night. They frequent the streets at all hours; and the manner in which they are both able and dare to cross the city is something little short of marvellous, for they go entirely alone. No small boy or faithful friend shelters them from the crowd, or guides them into passages for the moment clear. Armed only with a long staff, they venture alone into the thick of the city's throng. They walk boldly forward, and somehow escape unhurt; and so erect is their bearing and straight their course, that at first you would never suppose that to them it was always night. Of course, carriages, fortunately, are wanting; there is nothing worse than a bull to collide with. Also the moderate pace of the human travel around them makes matters less dangerous. But allowing for all favoring conditions, the deed is very daring, and the confidence, begotten of consideration, sublime.

There is one more excuse for being out after dark, — a physician's prescription. A paper from a doctor to procure medicine from an apothecary's shop is sufficient warrant for one of the people to be abroad the necessary time to have it filled. If the man, however, is gone too long, or is found at a distance from where he ought to be, he is held guilty of breaking the law, and is punished accordingly.

Human nature is startlingly the same the world over. Numerous stratagems are practised to evade the law and yet avoid being caught. The first device is the counterfeiting of the badges worn by officials. As the badges are to be scrutinized only by the light of a feeble lantern, the counterfeiting of them is much facilitated. The difficulty here is not with the badge, but with the manners of the man. Properly to

personify an official is to one of the populace no easy task. Would-be magistrates have been detected by the way they held their respirators or pocketed their fans.

Another ruse is to imitate a physician's prescription. To copy the seal, the actual forgery, is comparatively easy; but to write the body of the text so as not to excite suspicion is not so simple as it appears. It is a little bit of painting, and the touch of a practised hand is to a practised eye discernible at once.

A third plan much in vogue, because requiring less preparation and depending for its success upon the skill of the moment, is to personify a blind man. All that the prodigal need provide himself with is a long staff. He then keeps his eyes about him, and whenever he sees any one approaching, he assumes the blind man's gait and begins feeling round with a stick. But the patrol is a match for the prodigal. The policeman waits until he has got by, and then suddenly hails him. The pseudo-blind man, forgetful of his assumed infirmity, instinctively turns his head, thus betraying his habit, and is grappled and hurried off to receive the reward of failure.

On certain occasions, few in number, the enforcement of the law is suspended, and everybody is at liberty to make of two days one. The year begins, propitiously enough, with one of these. New Year's day is, of all Korean festivals, the most important, and New Year's eve is given over to the enjoyment of the populace.

All this is dark, — the negative side of the picture, the void resulting from a curfew. Its positive side is represented by a few curs, the sole denizens of the great deserted. Through the long watches of the night, the city is their property alone. Not only do dogs constitute the only sign of life in the streets, but in a peculiar manner the liberty which is denied to man is given them. The details of their life are curious, and

sometimes as ingenious as diverting, as is instanced by the Korean latch-key.

The latch-key I mean does not belong to man. To a Korean there is no such thing as entering his own abode unknown to others. Either he comes home attended by a retinue of servants, who clamor vociferously without till other servants from within draw back the long wooden bolt that makes of the double door a single solid piece; or else, being one of the common people, he needs no admittance, because, from nightfall till dawn, the curfew law forbids him to roam abroad. The latch-key I speak of is a perquisite of the dog.

At the bottom of one of the two folds of every Korean outer gate — a gate that leads from the street into the outer court-yard, and which is invariably closed and bolted at night — there is a small rectangular hole. It is perhaps eight inches by six in size, — an opening cut out of one of the panels. Too small to afford an entrance to marauding humanity, it just comfortably fits the body of a dog. It is there to admit at his own pleasure the vagrant family cur. It is a sort of pass-key, suited to canine intelligence. Of the whole household, he is the only member permitted the choice of his own hours. It is almost unnecessary to add that the word "dog" is not an epithet of contempt in Korean. "Sheep" is their vituperative simile.

The social position of the dog in the far-East is quite different from what it is with us. More liberty and less affection is given him there. He is a hanger-on of civilization rather than a part of it. Nobody pays him the slightest attention, and in consequence he learns to look after himself. The hole in the door is the best comment on the animal. He fully bears out in his behavior the suggestion of prodigal sonship which inseparably connects itself with the idea of a latch-key. He is a born Bohemian of a dog. He is forever prowling about the streets,

or in his lazier moments gossiping with familiar spirits before his own door. These are his more agreeable qualities; otherwise he is a disgrace to his amiable tribe. He is vicious and cowardly; in spite of his centuries of association with man, he is still wellnigh wild. Neglect has brought him to his present condition. He is suffered for his usefulness alone; for he is to a certain extent a scavenger, — a supplementary associate in that occupation to the kite, upon whom the duty principally falls.

In appearance he resembles the collie. Indeed, it would be interesting to ascertain whether he is not, in truth, a descendant of a prehistoric sheep-dog; for although sheep were not brought with them by the Koreans when they moved to their present home, it is altogether probable that before this migration they were a pastoral people. This would also, in some manner, account for the transferrence of the term of abuse from the clever collie, who was as his master's right hand, to the stupid sheep, whose behavior naturally excited both annoyance and contempt.

With the natives the animal lives on terms of mutual indifference, but in the strange-looking foreigner he recognizes at once an enemy, of whom he is mortally afraid. No sooner does he catch sight of the uncouth figure turning the corner of a street than he scampers, barking, to the protecting security of the gateway. The speed with which he can disappear through the hole, if the gate happens to be shut, turn completely round, and reappear quivering with excitement behind it, is something remarkable. Occasionally he is caught unawares. Forgetful of the existence of such things as foreign apparitions, and pursuant to some momentary whim, he starts on the run in what happens to be your direction, and then suddenly catching sight of you, tries to turn instantly to retreat, completes several somersaults in his attempt to stop,

and finally succeeding vanishes as fast as he came, never forgetting, in the most awkward moments of his startling experience, to bark continuously.

So much for the use of the hole. It also does duty as a picture. It is, in fact, the framing of a portrait, — that of the dog's face as he sits within and scans the passers-by through the opening.

But of all hours, perhaps, the time to know the dog is at night, when he has the city to himself. Like a gnome, he steals along through the darkness of the unilluminated streets. He is the spirit of the night, abroad to live his life. In the far-East this spirit is the dog, as with us it is the cat. A phantom, a half-smothered growl, a hasty scuffle, and then two glaring eyeballs, like coals of fire, seen through the opening of the door, — and you have met and still behold a dog.

In one of the darkest corners of one of the crookedest streets I came upon what looked like a gibbet. It was perhaps ten feet high, and its arm stretched out over the street and swayed in the night breeze like a thing uneasy in mind. From this arm there hung — not a man indeed, but what looked quite as ghastly — the remains of a lantern which had gone out. It had once been lighted, but the wind had blown it out; and the same wind that had extinguished it now caused it to sway from side to side in piteous creakings, as if, not content with taking the life, it must further torment the disembodied spirit. All was pitch-dark about it, the house below being apparently as black as the rest; and yet it was meant for the alluring sign of a sake shop, a sort of Korean bar-room. Even in other more favorable specimens, where the light still showed a sickly glimmer, there was little to suggest jollity. Rather did it seem a beacon to warn one off the rocks. But then a Korean is used to gloom.

Finally I reached my own gateway. The lantern-bearer called out to rouse the dozing servants within; and as that failed, began to pound violently upon the heavy wooden door. At last some one awoke, started to his feet, and hurried across the courtyard. The wooden bolt was drawn back with a sharp click, and the door swung open. My voyage in the dark was ended.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A KOREAN BANQUET.

MY compound fronted on a street called "The Street of Ashes." This street ran north and south, and stretched nearly from one end of the city to the other, a distance of several miles. It might have been quite imposing had it been straight. Fortunately for its picturesqueness, it was so only in general intention, and in practice wandered here to the right hand and there to the left, in fickleness of purpose, as it sauntered across the town. Its width, also, was variable. Now it contracted to a mere lane, and then again it widened into something very like a square. It accommodated itself with singular complacency to the wants of the houses between which it lay, — here shrinking into a bare existence before some grasping wall; anon, left to itself, expanding with apparently unlimited capability. Like its peers, it furnished room, in its wider portions, for numerous booths of time-honored squatters. In fine, it was a typical Korean thoroughfare.

It might at first seem a question whether it was one or many, for it bore several names in the course of its journey. But, from the analogy of Korean rivers, we see that it will not do hastily to conclude that a multiplicity of names negatives a singleness in identity. On the south it started imposingly enough from before a royal mausoleum, but rather uselessly, as no one was permitted to enter this almost sacred enclosure.

So, for purposes of travel, the street had been suffered to extend in a humble sort of way round the outlying wall back to where it could connect with a certain cross-road. But on the north, some distance after it passed my gate, it much diminished in importance, ran up a ravine, and finally lost itself in a wild sort of garden or park. This park bore the name of "The Glen of the Blue Unicorn." It was one of the little valleys made by the spurs of the mountain beyond, and in shape was a sharp hollow enclosed by a semi-circular rise at the upper end. Though the soil was sandy, the dell was dotted with a sparse growth of scraggy pine, and the summit was capped with a wall which also ran around the sides and effectually shut it off from the rest of the world. The wall was made of the earth of the place, moistened with water, so as to render it adhesive, and had been moulded into shape, and then suffered to dry into one compact mass, till now it looked as if it had been one of Nature's own defences to the seclusion of the valley. At the entrance to the ravine stood a well where the women of the neighborhood came to draw water, and on a rock that overhung it were carved the characters of the name of the place. The street proper ended just outside of this at a gateway which gave admittance to what was a continuation of it, — a path that climbed up one side of the valley till it stopped before a couple of pavilions placed on the upper semi-circular ledge of earth.

To one standing on this natural amphitheatre there was a hushed sense as of interstellar stillness; for the noise of the city lost itself in the hollow beneath, and no sound of neighboring man found its way in upon the quiet of the spot. Yet, through vistas between the trees, by him who cared to look, could be caught glimpses of the town at his feet, while the slopes of the South Mountain rose, a blue-tinged ridge, in the gap beyond.

On a day in the early part of the twelfth moon of the Korean year, the peaceful quiet of the spot was ruthlessly invaded. The tramping of palanquin coolies, as they stumbled up the path, broke in upon a stillness that had wrapped the little glen for many months. One set had no sooner passed than another followed in its footsteps. Chair after chair thus climbed up the ravine, till, arrived at the top, each in turn disgorged its occupant upon the terrace in front of the pavilions. The weather was so cold — for it was the middle of winter — that the official who got out hastened to take refuge in a sort of summer-house that stood on the farther corner of the terrace. From inside this pavilion stole out, through the paper panelled sides, the sounds of revelry of such guests as had already come. He pushed open the door, and disappeared within.

The occasion of the gathering was a banquet to the Foreign Office by one of its members. The officials of that august body had conceived the happy thought of a set of dinners to be given by each official in turn to the others, thus cleverly securing at a single stroke not one but many entertainments. This was the first of the series, and the Vale of the Blue Unicorn had been selected as a spot worthy the initial dinner. In spite of all its seeming sacredness, it was for just such purposes that the place existed. The most beautiful spots are always chosen as places of entertainment, not that the feast may have a proper setting, but that the scenery may be comfortably admired. Owing to the season of the year, such adoration in this case was impossible from its inconvenience, and the dinner took on more of the features of dinners elsewhere. But even thus deprived of its principal *raison d'être*, a dinner in the midst of a park was more in keeping with their notions than one inside a compound. So the Blue Unicorn had been ruthlessly awakened from his hibernating trance. Following the example of

my predecessors, I walked along the terrace, and entered the summer-house.

The summer-house was a temple to poetry. Within, its walls were covered with poems, — the work, as chance had it, of the giver of this very feast. The house was divided into two rooms. The first of these was being used as an antechamber by the servants, who fell back when they saw me, to let me pass. To drive away the cold, — for the paper walls but ill subserved the purpose, — a brazier had been put in the centre of the inner room. Around this, in a sort of Druid circle, were ranged high-backed chairs, and upon them were seated the company, actively engaged in absorbing tobacco and giving out wit. They were thus whiling away the several half-hours till dinner should be announced. For a feast in Korea is an all-day affair; and should the repast be too hastily begun, there might be left at the end of it time upon the revellers' hands, who would thus feel self-cheated of their due amount of pleasure. Although it was quite cold, even in spite of the brazier, the Koreans sat in enviable unconcern, for they were very thickly clad. In this they are more rational than the Japanese, with whom custom seems to take the place of costume, and who go about in winter the very picture of misery, clad in garments in which most of us would simply freeze. That they die of consumption in other lands is no wonder; the wonder is that they do not more commonly die in their own.

Even the hour before dinner eventually is numbered with the past, and at last we were summoned to the other pavilion. As soon as we had entered it, the officials began to disrobe. A Korean, instead of dressing, undresses for dinner. The custom is much to be commended. He does so that he may eat with the greater ease. Perhaps when we learn the advisability of discussing our food at one time and our fancies at another, we

may be tempted to do likewise. In this case, however, as the second pavilion had not yet had time to warm up, I avoided following suit. We took our places at a large rectangular table, eight of us in all, and were first served with soup and sul. This was the first course, and during it the table remained in virgin beauty. It was covered with mounds of food of all kinds. The dishes were brazen bowls, hemispherical in shape. These were not only filled with meats, fish, vegetables, and fruits, but their contents boldly overtopped the modest bounds the bowls suggested, and soared in dignified self-reliance far into the air. Each bowl was crammed with a compact mass, of whatever it happened to be, which then, following the figure imparted to it below, rose above the rim, and towered into a cylinder of food rounded at the top. In one this mass was meat cut into small bits; in another, sliced fish; in a third, baked dough; and so on. As no food in the far-East is what we should call perfectly dry, the pyramids were very solid structures, and kept their shape, save for authorized inroads, till what remained of them was at last taken bodily away; and apparently the remains were capable of continuing erect forever after. In the centre of the table stood the *chef-d'œuvre*, to which all the other dishes were merely satellary adjuncts. It rose out of a bowl somewhat larger than its fellows, and towered considerably above them. It was intended for a very superior work of art, and in its own line certainly stood unrivalled. It was a noble dome-capped cylinder, and its peculiar merit consisted in being party-made; that is, it was composed of four kinds of fruit, each occupying a solid quadrant of the whole. One segment consisted entirely of oranges; another of pears; a third of dried persimmons; and the fourth of chestnuts. The divisions between each of these were so sharply drawn that it would have been possible to have removed three of them and still have left the fourth standing as solidly as before. It reminded

one, though with much greater reason for being, of those barbarous party-colored bouquets much affected by New York florists. In this case it had convenience, if not beauty, to commend it, as became evident when we had reached that point in the repast consecrated to attacking it.

At present, however, we were still in the middle of the soup. This was brought in, in covered china bowls, from a neighboring room by numerous servants — body servants they were — of the various officials. There were so many of them that for one who did anything, four or five others stood by and encouraged him to do it by repeating the orders and freely giving him their idea of how the thing should be done. However, they did not succeed in spoiling the broth, — perhaps because they were not cooks, but only waiters. Meanwhile others were busy serving out sul and beer. This last beverage had lately been imported, and had taken as completely in Korea as it has already done in Japan. So thoroughly has Japan acquired the taste, indeed, that long since she partially threw off the yoke of importation, and began to manufacture it for herself; and now many native breweries help to supply the wants of the dwellers in the large cities, the Japanese having found the avowed manufacture of the article itself even more profitable than the counterfeiting of the foreign labels, in which employment at one time they drove a most lucrative business.

When they had removed the bowls of soup, the attendants proceeded to hand round in turn some of the dishes that had up to this point challenged my unbounded admiration for their portentous height in the centre of the table. We were asked to destroy these marvels of culinary construction, — no easy task, owing to their consistency. Some were composed of beef, some of pork, some of fried fish in thin yellow slices. Most of them were delightful potpourris to a Korean; and even to foreign taste they were a not injudicious medley of good things. While

one of the mounds in which they lay packed was being offered me, and just as I was in the middle of an excavation into its stubborn interior, I became aware of a commotion in the farther end of the hall. I turned my head just in time to see, from between the opening ranks of the servants, a vision of beauty come fluttering into the room. She was a young woman, clad in the gayest of colors, and exquisitely clean. In this combination of nature and art she shone to great advantage, for neatness is not a distinguishing characteristic of the race. She advanced with a pretty bashfulness, as much felt as assumed, till all of a sudden she caught sight of me. She started as if she had seen a ghost. Her coy modesty at once gave place to unfeigned alarm, and she shrank back as if for protection into the farthest corner of the room. Everybody began to laugh, and banteringly to call me tiger, — the Korean simile for the horrible; to her alone the name was terribly real. She would have run from the room had the servants suffered her to pass. As it was, she stood there cowering, not daring to take her eyes off me, and at first quite deaf to all cajoleries from the rest of the company. Perceiving, however, that though a tiger, I was to a certain extent tame, she finally allowed herself to be coaxed into taking a seat at the table, as far removed from my own as possible, from which she shot, from time to time, furtive glances in my direction, to assure herself that I was still quiescent. As the dinner wore on, she recovered somewhat of her natural vivacity; but it took her many dinners' worth of juxtaposition before she became at all sociable with the horror-inspiring stranger.

The next one to make her appearance, fortunately for my temporary happiness, showed no such intense aversion to a foreigner. With her, curiosity was a stronger trait than fear; and she had, besides, already had some little practice in the matter. After a very proper amount of maidenly reluctance,

she was induced to sit next me and coyly to take her part in the general jollity.

Then others followed. These charming creatures were richly dressed in the gaudiest colors, — bright pinks, blues, purples, greens. The material was principally silk, while their outermost sacks and their hats were trimmed with fur. In marked contrast to their clothes, their hair was done in beautiful simplicity. It was taken straight back, and tied in a braid gathered up behind, which was pierced by a large thick pin of solid silver. Of this pin they were justly quite proud. It was six inches long and a third of an inch in diameter in the shank, being still larger at the end. It shone very effectively against their jet-black hair. Their dress was composed of a short, close-fitting jacket above and long skirts below. The effect of the skirts, combined with that of the head-dress, was such as to give the wearers a much more European appearance than is the case with Japanese or even Chinese women. In one respect, however, they differed markedly from such specimens of their sex. Their waist was for some occult reason assumed to be on a level with their armpits. As can easily be imagined, this played havoc with their figures; still there was a quaint beauty even about the ruin. The damsels were Korean singing-girls.



A HASTY SKETCH DRAWN WITH A PENCIL IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION, BY A KOREAN WHO WAS NOT AN ARTIST.

Now, the singing-girl is an institution in the far-East. The word but faintly expresses the person. In Japan, where the class attains its greatest luxuriance, they are called "geisha," — a name which means "accomplished person," and much more

nearly does them justice; for to sing is but a small part of their duty. Their business is to sing, play, talk, flirt, and generally to make themselves as agreeable as possible; for they constitute all the female society there is. Until affected latterly by Western ideas, the Japanese women, with the exception of a few court ladies, were in no way companions of the men. They were, in the narrowest sense, wives, mothers, and housekeepers. To supply in some sort this lack of female society, the geisha came into existence. She is a professional entertainer, who, after a thorough course of preparatory study, devotes her life to enlivening banquets, which are always, except for her presence, exclusively stag-parties. So popular is the institution, that the geisha of a single ward of Tokio are numbered by hundreds.

In Korea, the profession is much less cultivated. In Söul, there are only between twenty and thirty geisha, and they are not nearly so accomplished as their Japanese cousins. The smallness of the number itself implies a want of excellence in the individual; for were there a demand, it would stimulate quality no less than quantity. But though Söul is a large city, it must be remembered that it is not a rich one. Only the officials can often afford themselves the luxury.

When this bouquet of damsels — for they were named Miss Peach Blossom, Miss Plum Flower, Miss Rose, Miss Moonbeam, and Miss Fragrant Iris — had scattered themselves in such a manner that each man might have a flower, the servants filled up the glasses again, and the stream of merriment flowed on redoubled. The laughter of the girls furnished applause to any unusually personal sally, and it was only when the fair ones sang that they saddened us. The quavers, which largely take the place of notes, gave to my ear the effect of a plaintive wail. The most noticeable and charming characteristics of these geisha were their gentleness and delicacy. These traits are,

however, peculiar neither to the geisha nor to Korea, but are distinguishing traits of all far-Eastern women. A far-Eastern woman never seems to forget under any circumstances that she is a woman. Like their Japanese cousins, they were *petites*, with remarkably small hands and feet and, unlike the Japanese, small heads too. Their feet were as Nature made them; for no Tartar would think of cramping her feet.

Meanwhile we had partially come back in attention, not indeed to our mutton, which is unknown in Korea, but to what followed the various meats, which was a dough baked brown in large pellets and eaten with honey. It is related to the "mochi" of Japan, and the nearest substitute they have for the many articles, from bread to pastry, that we fashion from the grains. The Japanese, oddly enough, do possess the single article sponge cake, — a legacy from the Portuguese of the sixteenth century, and still called by their own Portuguese name as nearly as Japanese lips can pronounce it. This, of course, does not exist in Korea. As for the honey, Korea is remarkable for it, and furnishes many different kinds in many different colors. It is always served apart from the comb.

Long as it is, even a Korean dinner comes to an end; and it does so in a parting flush of glory, in the shape of a decoction of pear-juice, colored crimson and spiced with pine-nuts, red like the sunset or the autumn. We sipped this nectar at our leisure, and at the same time we demolished the stately central pyramid. After this feat we leaned back in our chairs, and the attendants lit for us our pipes. This service was hardly so gratuitous a luxury as it sounds. The pipes were a yard long; and it was only just within the bounds of possibility, represented in this case by the reach with which Nature has endowed us in the arm, to light them one's self. Even when feasible, it was a most uncomfortable stretch. The pleasantest way to do it is to get some one at the other end of the room

to apply the match, while you pull away at the mouthpiece. In this case etiquette demanded that the servant should start it himself, and bring it to us already going. A not unwarranted squeamishness made me always object to this; and whenever I could catch them in time I waived the ceremony. The pipes were made of slender bamboo, fitted with brass bowls and brazen mouthpieces, but finished to resemble silver. Though of the same form, it is a much more nearly full grown specimen of a pipe than the Japanese; and what is especially pleasing, the bowls are much larger, so that one has not continually to be knocking out the ashes and refilling them, — an operation which spoils the enjoyment of the latter, to our way of thinking. It would also consume far too much time, were the Japanese not so deft at the trick.

Smoking is as common in Korea as in Japan; that is, everybody smokes — all the time. Not to smoke is so much of an exception in either land that when, for instance, in Japan the "tabako-bon," or wooden box with the ash-tray, etc., is handed round, — the first attention shown a guest, — a man who does not smoke invariably excuses himself by saying that he is a rude rustic fellow who unfortunately lacks the polish of the habit.

While we gathered into the usual post-prandial knots, the girls made ready to dance. They took off several upper garments without producing the effect of having taken off anything; for their dresses differed amazingly little in kind, though excessive in quantity, and came off one after the other like so many enclosing shells. When they got through they were as much dressed to the eye as they had been before. (Here I may add that the Koreans are a people who cover their persons with punctilious care, and are shocked by the indifference about exposure common in neighboring Japan.) Having thus prepared themselves, one of them then tucked

up her long skirts that they might not trail on the ground, and began slowly to revolve with her arms extended horizontally, after the manner of a dancing dervish. Fortunately for her own equilibrium and our eyes, her intent was not the same; instead of trying how long she could keep going in one direction, she soon reversed the motion, and even varied it with other gestures. Another then joined the first, now advancing, now retreating, and performing all manner of half-pantomimic motions, but turning continuously. It was one of the slowest dances I ever beheld. It was accompanied by some music, and encouraged by the singing of another geisha. A good name for it would be the peg-top dance.

This was my first experience of Korean dancing, and I was not bewitched. Luckily for my opinion of it, I subsequently saw many others, — notably a sort of soldier dance, which was exceedingly good.

The short afternoon had drawn to an end, and the lanterns of the officials were being one by one lighted. It was a sign of the breaking up. A dinner in Korea is a day, not a night, affair; and artificial light is rather a twilight of the day that is passed than the harbinger of a new one just begun. We all prepared to go home. The tall lanterns of the officials — they stood three feet high — added not a little to the scene. The candle within was draped from view by an outer covering of gauze of a brilliant red or a green, or half one, half the other, according to the rank of the official. These stood round in the hall, giving out their dingy-colored light, or were carried and swung in the courtyard, as one by one we summoned our chairs, got into them, and then — each a *cortege* in himself, so great was the retinue that followed him — set off down the valley home.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MY FRIEND THE MATHEMATICIAN.

IT has often been said that Poetry and Mathematics are own sisters. They differ in feature, but not in blood; and their common mother is Imagination. The saying will soon lose, if indeed it has not already lost, the brilliant glitter of a seeming paradox, but only to be recognized with all the more distinctness as a truism. For art is to the senses what science is to thought, and both have their birth in the realms of fancy. To appreciate the one the senses must be acute, to understand the other the mind must be discerning; but to originate in either, this is as truly dependent upon imagination in science as in art. The faculty has to do with thought pictures there, with sense creations here; but in both the creative idea comes seemingly from without the man himself. It comes suddenly upon him, as the flame, on relighting a candle that still is warm, appears to fall to the wick from the air above it. But the wick must be warm, the mind prepared, or the spark never kindles.

Of all the arts, perhaps the one most closely allied to mathematics is music. As on the one hand it is more completely a creation, so on the other it is more capable of analysis. Now, its sound calls up feelings that seemed dead, so fast they slumbered; and again, and its study suggests some of the most interesting of physical problems.

But however we may associate sound with sense, we should hardly have derived the measures of one from those of the other. We should hardly have made melody to spring from arithmetic, still less arithmetic from melody. To bind them by law who are already espoused in heart, is one of the prettiest conceits of the far-East. Though it comprehends not the real tie between the two, custom, from the old pastoral days of the shepherd's song, has bequeathed it most curiously, as it were a symbol for the bond. With it the key-note of all science is actually a note, — a note of music; for the standard of all measures is based upon the size of a certain flute, whose self-determined criterion of accuracy is the sound it is capable of giving forth. Instead of man's stature, the cubit, the foot, the ell; instead of the earth's size, the part of the arc of a meridian; instead even of modern science, with its self-dependent absolute units for bases of measurement, — we have here a voice as the ultimate appeal. Truly, there is something of Arcadia in it, something fortuitously fitting to that time when the world was truer to its instincts of beauty than the treadmill of conventionality suffers us to show ourselves to-day.

The opening page of far-Eastern treatises of mathematics begins as follows: —

"The measures of length, of volume, and of weight, all are derived from the length of a certain kind of flute. This flute is of bamboo, and its long-shortness [so the original tersely puts it] such as to produce a particular [specified] note.

"A certain number of grains of millet of average size make up a length equal to that of the flute. This grain of millet forms the unit of length.

"The flute will hold twelve hundred grains of millet. This is the unit of volume.

"The weight of the twelve hundred grains gives the unit of weight."

So runs, in substance, the ancient Chinese definition, now some decades of centuries old. But before we pursue the subject itself, — which will, perhaps, prove of interest to others beside the mathematician, — let me speak of a man about whom to me, and also I trust to the reader, there hangs the mantle of a striking personality.

He is a Korean mathematician, and, what is not common there, an original one. He was brought to call on me one day by appointment, and I liked him from his first smile. His keen piercing eye showed him a man of quick intelligence, and his purple figured-silk wristers betrayed him a person of taste. True to his passion, we had no sooner broken the ice of introduction than he plunged at once into his subject, and began giving me problems. These were, to our notion, simple enough, but not without interest, — variations of our geometrical problems; and they gained no slight attraction from their Oriental garb. When he received the solutions his bright eyes sparkled, he moved his chair nearer, and laid his hand affectionately on my arm. Some of his questions were an inheritance from the old Chinese masters; some were the product of his own brain. The better to write, he took off his wristers, and so gave me a chance, while I waited for him to write out his questions, to feast my eyes upon the color and the workmanship. The patterned silk was exquisite, in two layers; and the rose tint below showed through the blue above, mingling into an everchanging purple.

He came again, the following day, and presented me with a fan made of paper set upon wood fashioned to represent bird's-eye maple, the eyes marked by charring of the wood. The whole was delicate, with the delicacy that pervades everything far-Eastern. This ceremony over, he drew forth from his sleeve a volume on mathematics of his own writing, and

proceeded to set me more problems. I was so struck with his examination of me, that I asked him if I could not get a copy of the book. He replied that he would have it copied for me. There were two volumes, it appeared, which in a few days he brought with him and presented to me, freshly painted. Painted! — the word calls up the thought of the second muse that has interwoven her art with what we are perhaps too prone to class as stern, dry reasoning; for in the far-East writing and painting are one. Both are done equally with the brush; both require, to Tartar taste, equal skill, and both are therefore equally honored. To write well is as difficult and highly valued an art as to paint well. In fact, the two are not distinct, but are branches of one and the same art, and one word describes both. To write or paint a book or even a letter, as a master would do it, is very difficult; even to appreciate the touch requires a great deal of study. A word will suffice to suggest the difficulty. Every Chinese character, as the reader knows, is made up of several strokes. The Western tyro imagines at first that when he shall have mastered the kind and position of these strokes, his work will be done. Delusive deduction! The subject, not inappropriately, here reminds one of some of the higher mathematics, where order is as essential as quality. Each stroke has position in time as well as position in space. The various strokes must follow one another in a definite order; otherwise the form even of the stroke is altered, for the brush in leaving the paper marks unavoidably, in free painting, a parting dash. To an experienced eye, an error in the order of the strokes is evident at a glance. This is the first step to be learned; afterwards comes the acquirement of touch, which involves the skill of natural aptitude and the practice of years. And thus it happens that this book of mathematics was painted.

A third muse entwines herself about the book, — Poetry. To her sister, Music, she yielded the *pas* of introduction; to Painting, the material form of expression; but she reserved for herself to touch into song the maxims which shape the whole. Where we should expect the enunciation of a proposition, we find a poem; in place of a rule, a rhythm. As gaunt and bare as skeletons, formulæ may seem as soulless; but even here the Muse contrives to throw something of feeling into the dry mnemonic bones. Let us listen to what is entitled "The Song for finding the First Figure in the Cube Root of a Given Number." I give it literally, without trying to keep the poetic form. I doubt whether I shall be able to convey the real beauty of the idea. The conception is to our thought so novel that the line between the beautiful and the ludicrous is a very difficult path to tread.

"Of a thousand the cube root is ten; this is clear.
When the number given is thirty thousand, the root is only thirty and a little more.
The first figure in the root of nine hundred and ninety thousand even is but some tens;
And the root is but one hundred when the number has reached a million."

At first, perhaps, the poetry does not appear; the idea seems as devoid of beauty as the translated form. But let us try, by reading through the words the thought, to see what it calls up to the mind of a far-Oriental. Here then the *motif* of the poem is the changelessness of the cube root amid the ever-changing transitory number. We detect the idea in the studied comparisons and in the little accompanying particles to intensify the antithesis. Numbers succeed each other, like flowers that last but for a day; but the root, deeper down, lives on perennial. Or like the landscape to a traveller, the nearer and better seen features hurry quickly by, while

the distant linger with him, changeless because so very far away.

To us, perhaps, the sentiment seems too abstract to please; but we must not forget that where woman is not an inspiration, Nature and even abstract thought have taken sentiment to themselves in a manner that appears over-subtile to our minds.

But such a feeling is not absolutely unknown in Europe and America. Only, what we should deem a passing conceit, as it scurried through the brain of a student at home, becomes a poem to the lifelong student in the far-East, who has little else to think about.

In the original, the lines have cadence, rhythm, rhyme. Like the Hebrew Psalms, one phrase balances the other; and, like more modern poetry, each concluding word matches in sound the word of the line before.

These poems are very old; they run back into long-past centuries of Chinese civilization. Nor is their association with mathematics an isolated phenomenon. The whole official oligarchy is based upon proficiency in verse. But they have here another aspect which is even more interesting than mere age. They point again to that shadowy influence from the homes of Aryan thought. Books of Indian geometry and algebra show the same desire to interweave philosophy and song.

But without, at present, crossing to the old Altaic table-land, this book of the Korean mathematician bears internal evidence of some value. It contains unmistakable signs of a mathematical knowledge prior to any contact with modern European thought. This knowledge is rude and empirical, and is found side by side with what is evidently of later date; but it is quite possible to separate the two. To appreciate the interest of the discovery, a little history is necessary.

About a hundred and fifty years ago the Jesuits entered the Celestial Empire, and at once became, in a most singular manner, the governing power of the State. They were wise enough to preach physics as well as theology, and in consequence they were constituted a sort of advisory board by the emperor. Their practical physics came in very opportunely. At that time the adjusting of the annual calendar was proving a source of continual annoyance to the Chinese sages. How to reconcile the sun and the moon into harmonious revolutions was a matter involving some embarrassment. The calender compilers suffered from an excess of units. They had entangled themselves in the difficulties of a double standard of measures of time, which with us, where time is money, may be paralleled by those of bi-metallism. Thirteen lunations pretty nearly went to make up the year, but not exactly, and there was a certain excess which had to be provided for. Then again there was always the question as to where the thirteenth moon should go in. They were not sorry therefore to have the Men of the Western Sea, as they called the strangers, solve the enigma for them. This solution easily paved the way for a teaching of Western mathematics; and the Chinese, recognizing their utility and perceiving no possible danger from their introduction, engrafted them upon their own crude system. From China the new scientific principles found their way into Korea and Japan.

In consequence of this adoption, one's researches among the learned, or mousings among old bookshops, commonly end only in disappointment. The lucky discoveries turn out on investigation to be but second-hand learning from abroad, amusing often from the garb in which it is found clothed, but to the discoverer home-made and consequently homely. One is so often disappointed that he comes at last to believe in nothing original. Men before me, I was told, had

hunted through Japan and found nothing. I had given up the search as hopeless, when fortune threw this book across my path, in Korea.

In order not to weary the non-mathematical reader, I shall not go into the evidence on the matter of age. I shall only mention a few facts in themselves sufficient, it seems to me, to excite an interest.

Every one has probably heard of what is known as "the carpenter's rule." It is a mechanical device for obtaining a right angle, — an important angle to carpenters in adjusting the parts of a building; for getting them square, as it is called. It depends upon the discovery of a curious mathematical ratio. If a triangle be made — out of wood or metal, let us say — whose three sides shall bear to one another the proportion of 3, 4, and 5, the angle enclosed between the sides whose lengths are 3 and 4 respectively, will be a right angle. Now, this device, which to most carpenters is a mysterious, unexplained fact, not only makes its appearance in the book, but does so under the seal of hoary antiquity. There is from Confucius, from "The Book of Rites," — an odd place to find such a thing, — the following quotation: "A right-angled ruler can be formed by making the base, altitude, and hypothenuse in the proportion of 3, 4, and 5;" "such a ruler," adds the Japanese translator in explanation of the word, "as is used by Japanese carpenters." Both the ratio, then, and the device were known in China at least twenty-four centuries ago. A fact like this seems to bring the intellectual kinship of the world startlingly before one.

They were also acquainted at a very early date with some knowledge of the important ratio of the diameter of a circle to its perimeter, — what is popularly known as squaring the circle. It is a ratio of great value in many problems about the contents of solids. The book reads as follows: —

"All these calculations rest on the formula of circumference 3, diameter 1, which was exclusively employed by the ancient mathematician Cho Ritsŭ Ken[1] and others. But subsequent mathematicians found that this ratio was not exactly true. We enumerate below some of the more exact formulæ: —

Diameter 100 feet, circumference 314 feet.
Diameter 7 feet, circumference 22 feet.
Diameter 10 feet, circumference 32 feet."

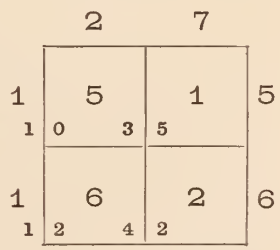
Now, Cho Ritsŭ Ken lived twenty-one centuries ago. How he obtained his ratio, as well as the subsequent mathematicians theirs, it would be interesting to learn. All that the book vouchsafes is this: "The value of the circumference was found by dividing the area of a circle." From which we may conclude that it was obtained, as it first was with us, by the method of inscribed polygons. Still more interesting would it be to discover by what means they became acquainted with its application to the solution of problems of volume, such as that of the sphere; for solve it they did, and they have left us the formula embodied in "The Song of the Sphere." But by what path they arrived at the solution they do not say. Unfortunately, on such points the book is mute. It furnishes a set of formulæ, and these it deems enough. These empirical commands are blindly learned and blindly followed to-day by students who have not the faintest idea of the meaning of the process. We see again the blight of learning in place of what should be the fruitfulness of thought. In the study of a master, what he said is with them the important point, not why he said it. Truly, mathematics are as inanely taught in the far-East as Latin and Greek have been with us.

For the sake of its novelty I will quote one more thing from the book, — its system of multiplication. Our simple

[1] This is the Japanese form.

practice of writing one of the numbers below the other, and then multiplying *in situ* in successive rows, is impossible with them, because the idea of expressing large numbers by successively written digits is unknown. We make position itself express size; they do not. We write 312, and it means "three hundred and twelve." They can only express three hundred and twelve by writing "three hundreds, one ten, two." I have been obliged to write "hundreds" in the plural, in order to convey the meaning. Really, it is a symbol incapable of a plural, as all Chinese characters are; the plural signification is given it by the 3 that precedes it. In short, then, to write 312 five characters are necessary, as will be seen by counting the words in the translation. The expressions "ten," "hundred," "thousand," etc., are not numbers as we know them; they are a sort of middle conception between our numbers and expressions of things such as horse, cow, field. Fully to explain the idea would take too long. Suffice it to say, therefore, that it is one of the many subtile conceptions of the far-East, but subtile simply because foreign to our every-day methods of thought. A study of a far-Eastern language teems with such conceptions, which is one reason why such study is so interesting.

To express multiplication, then, this is what they have devised. Suppose they wished to multiply 27 by 56. They would write it as in the accompanying cut. They multiply 7 by 6, which equals 42, and place the 4 in the corner of the second square from the right in the lower row, and the 2 in the corner of the first lower square. The same is done in its proper position with each of the other simple multiplications. Then all the small numbers in each square in the lower row are added together, making the big number in the centre of each. Each of these big numbers is then



added to the small number in the corner of the square diagonally above it to the right, and the units' digit of the sum written in the centre of this square. The second digit of the sum is carried forward to form a part of the next addition. Lastly, the big numbers are added together in the same direction, and the result is read by beginning at the top on the left and reading round. The answer, for instance, in this case is 1512. They still express of the process much that we carry in our heads.

The symbols for numbers in Korea, as in Japan, are Chinese. These Tartar peoples apparently never possessed any numerals of their own, just as from their own heads they had evolved no writing at the time they came under the influence of Chinese thought. But the Chinese symbols are not themselves native. In their turn, they were borrowed from India. Though we should never recognize any connection to-day, they are, in fact, transformations of the symbols of our own forefathers. This species of thought-money — for it is both a measure of value and in some sort a quantitative medium of exchange — was invented by the ancient Aryan races, and then circulated over the world, — to China, on the one hand, and to Europe, through the Arabs, on the other. Strange as they look to-day, the same symbols, worn and changed by use, face one another across the Pacific. A study of the older Indian forms makes this almost indisputable. The most ancient bear a striking resemblance to the Chinese; so that we can hardly doubt that in some of those journeys which inhabitants of the Celestial Empire made to the West, they borrowed and brought back home what has remained almost unchanged in form even to the present day. Meanwhile the Indian symbols went on changing, until at the time the Arabs in their turn came and borrowed, the symbols had nearly reached the form with which we are now familiar. The symbols continued to change at home, and the travellers somewhat altered what

they had carried away. The Arabs became mathematicians as well as conquerors; and after badly frightening Europe, they so impressed her philosophers that these not only sought from them the matter of their teachings, but took its very form. The signs proved so convenient that they descended into general use.

We now paint them upon bales of merchandise, and send them to make their own way over the face of the earth. It was thus that my friend the mathematician first saw them. One day he said to me, with that mixture of hesitation and desire that marks a man when about to expound a discovery of his own, that he could write our numerals; and then he proceeded to do so in their proper order. He had learned them, it appeared, by carefully examining the few boxes of foreign goods which had already found their way to Söul.

He often came to see me, and sometimes I would meet him in the street. Unexpectedly we would run across each other, — I in my hurried gait, and he in his quiet, dignified walk, — or I would look up and see him standing there looking at me; and when we met he gave me both his hands. With a certain pathos he would speak of himself as of one who lived afar in the forests of the mountains, — one who had pondered with himself, but had never mingled with the life of the town. By the forest he meant Söul, and the city typified the thought of the outside world; and upon the titlepage of his book runs the legend, "By Kim Nak Chip of the Moon Castle."

CHAPTER XXV.

ARCHITECTURE.

FEW of us, when scanned with the microscope of daily life, are altogether noble; and our littlenesses are too apt to mar the effect of what is really grand to those who observe us from too near. Held close enough, a copper will eclipse the sun. To no people is this better known than to those of the far-East. In order to be respected they hedge themselves about with ceremonial. They make use of it in their customs, their writings, their dress; and the same feeling finds expression in the construction of their buildings. There it takes the form of a multiplicity of approaches; and as the more respected the object the greater the ceremonial, it is towards that which they hold most sacred that the practice is carried to its fullest development. What we see in a nest of Chinese boxes, one within the other, is an illustration of exactly the same principle. The object always eventually found contained in the innermost is enhanced in value just in proportion to the difficulty of getting at it. This object is represented, in Korea, first by the king and secondly by the magistracy. The Government is everything that is great. So, also, everybody who is anybody is in the Government.

The approaches vary in kind, according to the degree of intimacy they bear to the main building. First and outermost stands what is called, in Korean, the Hong Sal Mun, or "Red

Arrow Gate." This is a singularly odd and strikingly unique structure, and to the student it derives still further interest from being purely Tartar. In origin, it is religious, or more exactly, superstitious; for it dates back to the earliest spirit-worship, — the old mythological days when a hero was a demigod and a king by ancestry divine. For in the aboriginal faith, unchanged to this day, the king is the lineal descendant of the gods, and their representative and mediator to men; and so, because of his genealogy, it was erected as an outer portal to his gates. Nor did the custom stop there. His glory was reflected upon those who carried out his will, — the official class. From his mansion it was copied for theirs, so that now the distinctive mark of a magistracy is the Red Arrow Gate. This is what it is in Korea. But it is all the more interesting that its acquaintance was not made there. In fact, till now its presence there was not known. It was in Japan that the first example of this curious structure came to the notice of the Western world, and then in connection with temples. It is there known by the name of "torii," commonly but questionably translated as "bird's rest." Originally the portal to Shinto shrines, it was borrowed by Buddhism, and now guards indifferently the approach to buildings of either religion. In this it differs entirely from the use to which it is put in Korea, for in the peninsula it never does service to Buddhist temples. At first sight the reason is perhaps not evident; yet its use in the one land explains collaterally its use in the other, and points to a primitive idea, of which both are natural, though different, applications. In Japan, the Mikado is a son of heaven, and head of the Shinto faith, which is the aboriginal belief. Church and State are one, — the Mikado and the old Shinto faith, — for Buddhism is but a later addition to the religious wealth of the country. By a mistaken analogy did Buddhism come to make use of this gate, to which in truth it was perfectly alien. In Korea, on the other

hand, the State is all in all. Instead of the State's merging into the Church, the Church was very early swallowed up, at least in its outward expressions, by the State. Then, when Buddhism came to be engrafted on the country, there was no excuse, such as existed in Japan, to give it what had by that time ceased to be looked upon as peculiarly religious. So the portal continued to be employed, as before, entirely as a sign of kingly authority, and was never converted into another symbol of Buddhistic show.

In form it differs slightly from its Japanese counterpart. It wants the graceful curves that make that so beautiful a structure by itself. It lacks, also, the other's diversity of material. It is built invariably of wood, and its claim to attention arises rather from a certain quaint grotesqueness than from any intrinsic beauty. Two tall posts, slightly inclined to each other, are crossed by a third, and bound together a short distance above their crossing by still a fourth. All four are perfectly straight. Starting from the lower and projecting beyond the upper horizontal piece, are a row of vertical beams of wood, spear-shaped. These are the arrows of the name. In the centre is a design as singular to the eye as it is peculiar for its mystic meaning, — two spirals coiled together, filling the area of a circle. They are emblematic of the positive and negative essences of Chinese philosophy. Above them is the representation of tongues of flame. All this typifies the power of the king, joined, since the nation espoused the morality of Confucius, with a reverence for the sage. As the name implies, the whole is painted a bright red, which in Korea is the kingly color. Its height is from thirty to forty feet.

Its situation is striking. It rises by itself in solitary grandeur; it is not connected with either walls or buildings; it stands alone and apart. Nor has it any particular position assigned it with reference to the building proper. It may

stand near to or far from the shrine or the magistracy to which it leads. Placed only at a respectful distance, it fulfils but the one condition that it shall face what it foretells. It is there to direct the thought as much as to impress the mind. In Japan, where certain mountains are sacred and worshipped as shrines, it is often met with tens of miles away from what it heralds, alone in the midst of Nature on the top of some high mountain-pass, over which lies the road, and from whose summit the pilgrim catches the first view of the desired goal, framed in like a picture between its posts. In Korea, it commonly spans the street, so that in so far at least passers-by do the king homage. But this is simply because the street is the natural approach. In the rural districts, where the street is wider, the portal's span of twenty feet can only occupy the middle, while the thoroughfare is as much around as under it. Yet so compelling is ceremonial that no one would think of entering save beneath its arch; and in Japan it is counted little short of sacrilege by properly superstitious persons, on their way to the temple or the shrine, to avoid it by going round.

Its discovery in Korea is further interesting as supplying another presumption in favor of a theory suggested by a noted scholar, that the ordinarily received meaning of the Japanese name for it, — "birds' rest" — is erroneous. This is the meaning of the Chinese characters by which it is at present expressed. But though these are the only direct and positive evidence in the matter, they are nevertheless but *prima facie* proof. The Japanese language existed before ever the Chinese ideographs were adopted to write it, and therefore the ideographs with which any word is now written are only evidence of what was considered to be the meaning of that word at the time they were adopted. There is always behind this the Japanese derivation of the word, which, though possible of course in the way the characters express it, may be possible also in

another way, and that other may really be the true one. Following this course, he suggests that "torii" is not derived from "tori" (a bird) and "i" (to be, or rest), but from "tōri" (to pass through) and "i" (to be), which would make it "a place of passing through." The only difficulty is with the long "ō." The syllable "tō" was originally "towo." At any rate, it seems altogether probable, either that this was the meaning, or else that the name "birds' rest" was a later designation, and not the original Japanese name for the structure.

To account for such an improbable name as "birds' rest," it is customary to instance the well-known respect of the Buddhist religion for animals. The gateway is there, so it is said, to afford a roosting-place for the sacred pigeons which frequent many of the Japanese temples. This would be most plausible, were the thing of Buddhist origin. But as we see, again and emphatically, from Korea, there is no original connection between Buddhism and the "torii." For the Red Arrow Gate has, in the peninsula, nothing whatever to do with Buddhist temples, and its name there is simply explanatory of its structure. This does not prevent birds from roosting on it, — as one happened to do at the moment the accompanying photograph was taken, — for it must be an exceedingly convenient place to roost. But its popularity with carrion kites and others in Korea at least suggests that as regards the custom of the Japanese pigeons, the name probably followed the fact, rather than the fact so courteous a dedication.

Having passed under this portal, and having — in Korea on account of its loftiness, in Japan for its remoteness — nearly forgotten that you had done so, you come next to the outer gate proper. Its generic name is simply "mun" (a gate). Its particular designation in places of importance will be "the gate of benevolence," "the gate of early spring," "the gate of virtuous contentment," and such-like flowery or moral titles. In

truth, it is not properly a gate, but an archway, and finds its type, in form, in the triumphal arches of ancient Europe, as in the arch of Constantine or the arch of Titus. In intent, of course, it is different, as the one is a ceremonial approach, the other also a commemorative structure. It is always fitted with gates. This exemplifies well the respect paid to the approach; for it stands at times — in Japan notably — quite by itself, and the gates can serve to bar only in imagination. To one who disregards the rites, an entrance is as physically possible as before, — by simply walking round the gate instead of through it. In Korea a wall is attached to it, but it is in no sense a part of this wall. With us the gate is but the beautified outgrowth of an aboriginal hole in whatever it may be, — wall or building, — but there it is otherwise. It is not an adjunct to the wall; the wall is an adjunct to it. In other words, its primary object is not to exclude, but to admit.

In fashion, it is built like a house raised a story into the air. When the whole is of wood, the effect of this is to add an apparent second story underneath; when of stone, it looks as though there had been a subterranean upheaval, by which the foundation had been bodily elevated, and then an archway subsequently cut through it. The gates of the city of Söul and of the Old and New Palaces belong to this latter class. The city gates are provided with but one opening in the masonry, formed in the shape of a rounded arch; those of the palaces have three, of like circular form and all of equal size. In the openings are fitted massive gates of wood, sheathed with iron. Mounting to the second story, if we may so call it (though it might with more propriety, considering that there is only a passage-way beneath, be spoken of, after French analogy, as *au premier*), we find a room open on the four sides. The spot is a favorite one in Korean romance, from the lazy dreaming its quiet renders possible. Raised above the din and

bustle of the streets, the hero of the tale, who is always a student, if also occasionally a lover, can lose himself in his books, while below, when he pleases to turn to it, throngs the life in which it is his ambition in the future to shine. Such is the city gate. That of the functionary is used for other purposes beside being the resort of meditative students. It is the concert hall of the magistracy. Being not far distant from the mansion itself, it is admirably adapted to the purpose. Here may be seen reposing, as a symbol of its duty, the big drum. Between it and the house lies a courtyard, across which, from its aerial nest, are wafted the plaintive sounds of Korean music. It is more especially for summer use. It is less frequented in the cold of winter; not, however, for the convenience of the players, who do not mind twenty degrees of frost in the least, but that the official — the owner of the abode — objects at that season to keeping the doors of his house open to listen.

There may be several of these gates leading to courtyard within courtyard, — shell within husk; while in the centre of all stands the kernel, — the house. Beyond the details I have mentioned, they are almost identical in structure with the house itself, to which, therefore, we will at once proceed. The holy of holies, as it often is in Japan, — here the *sanctum sanctorum* of the magistrate, — is in grandeur the reverse of what a European or an American would build in a similar situation. Instead of a gradual leading up to the finest of the whole, the effect is, if anything, a diminishing view, a sort of perspective realized, and at first rather shocks by its bathos.

For the sake of localizing our ideas, we will take first the house of an official of the Korean bureaucracy; and we will suppose the time winter, that we may the better scan the outside before examining the interior.

A flight of two or three stone steps leads up over the foundation to the house proper, ending upon a narrow piazza, or

very wide sill, which encircles the whole building. Upon the upper of these steps stands a row of shoes. They are placed side by side, and the toes of all of them face the entrance. They agree most suggestively in attitude, though otherwise quite dissimilar in appearance. They irresistibly recall a set of faithful dogs awaiting the return of their masters, who are, at this moment, probably tea-drinking and gossiping within. A corps of servants, soldiers, etc., idle about outside; but they seem not half so expressive of life as the mute sentinels on the threshold. Owing to the cold, many of the apertures are closed, and this gives a look of privacy to the building. It is but in appearance, however, as one discovers on entering, and is wholly alien to the character of the people. Privacy, as we know the term, does not exist, and dignity is sufficiently protected by the outer approaches. There are just as many servants standing about within as without, with all the sharper eyes and ears for the want of anything to employ the brain and hands. But for the present we are engaged upon the building.

There is one point, architecturally, about it worth noticing and admiring. The exterior and interior correspond. Instead of several rooms sharing happy-family-wise the same roof, and thus ruining to a certain extent both the external and internal effects, a single room occupies the house. The space is as entire within as the covering is one without. Though small, it shares this trait in common with the finest architecture that the world has produced, — with a Greek temple or a Gothic cathedral; and there is a dignified beauty about the complete which the partial or conglomerate invariably misses.

Originally, perhaps, this one building may have been enough; but in course of time wants in Korea, as elsewhere, multiplied, and building was added to building. At present a house of the better class is not one, but many. But the original type

remains; and though on the inside, room seems to follow room as naturally as possible, and occasional corridors appear to be an intrinsic part of the whole, viewed from without it is seen to be really a collection of separate but connected houses. Each has its own roof, while the corridors are covered by lower roofs under the eaves of the first. Then each of these collections is again repeated. Courtyard follows courtyard; houses, now in groups, now isolated, interspersed with gardens, succeed each other as the stranger wanders on through gate after gate, and at last loses himself in the labyrinth of dwellings.

There are curious laws of expenditure, allied to sumptuary law, touching the extent to which this adding of house to house may be carried. No man, whatsoever his station, is allowed to build a house of over one hundred rooms; but this does not mean so much as it appears to do at first. A room is reckoned at four feet square, or sixteen square feet, pointing to a still more primitive time yet in the construction of dwellings, when so small a space could be considered as the unit. By another law no one is permitted to build what shall cost above ten thousand "riang," or about one thousand dollars. It may be mentioned that this sum represents, for the wants of the people and the power of money to buy, at least what a hundred times that amount does to us. These are but two of many restrictions by which the common people, and even the nobles, are fettered in their architectural aspirations, as we shall see when we come to speak of the palaces.

Raised upon a stone or earthen pedestal, the house itself is built entirely of wood and paper. This pedestal is for other purposes than simply to lift the building above contact with the earth; it is a species of large furnace for warming the occupants during the winter months. On the outside, in the middle of one side of the base, which is rectangular, burrows



THE PILLARS OF THE PALACE OF SUMMER.

an out-of-door fireplace. It is called, in Korean, "the mouth." It well deserves the name; for ordinarily there is another room, or house, in the form of a transverse ell, built over it, which converts it into a cavernous hole, to peep into which suggests the jaws of the dragon of Korean folk-lore. Into this is stuffed brushwood, which is then lighted, and the smoke and heated air escape into a subterranean labyrinth which honeycombs the entire foundation. According to the degree of costliness of the house, this is constructed in different ways. There are three systems of arrangement of the flues. In the first a set of short stone pillars, a foot or so high, placed symmetrically at intervals, support a single slab of stone, covering the whole area of the room. As the stone is a very good retainer of heat, it would be inconvenient for dwelling purposes if left bare, becoming too hot for comfort when the fire was kindled. Upon it, therefore, is put a layer of earth, and above this is laid an oil-paper floor. The single slab of stone renders this method an expensive one; but the pillars permit of a more thorough and uniform heating than is possible by the other ways. In the second arrangement ribs of earth and small stones run lengthwise from front to back, disconnected for a short distance at either end with the outside wall of the foundation. The middle one is perfectly straight; the others have a short transverse section at the end next the oven, to enable them the better to catch the smoke and lead it to the opposite end of the labyrinth. The continuity of the ribs renders the use of a single slab unnecessary. Its place is therefore taken by a number of similar slabs of less size, and by earth bound together by small stones scattered irregularly through it. On top of these are placed the same protective materials as in the first case. The third method is adapted for a still poorer class of houses; earth takes the place of stone throughout, and the ribs are less carefully made. They are designed somewhat after the pattern of a pumpkin's bands, when

represented on a flat surface; starting near together, and then swelling out in the middle of their path, to contract again toward the farther end. Having no sharp angles, this form is preferable, on the score of efficacy, to the last.

Having sufficiently meandered through the labyrinth, the smoke, pushed by what succeeds, makes its escape ignominiously through a simple hole in the wall. Houses without chimneys, and with what takes their place horizontal instead of vertical, and yet warmed and suffering rather from a superabundance than a want of heat, are a conception as ingenious as it is to us peculiar.

The idea is a good one, and were it only supplemented by ventilation the system would be admirable. The feet are warmed while the head is kept cool, and with a constant supply of fresh air nothing could be more healthy. Unfortunately, the room above is no better than a box, in which the occupant is slowly roasted. The principle suffers also from the disadvantage of being a quarter of an hour behind time. The room does not even begin to get warm until you have passed through an agonizing interval of expectancy. Then it takes what seems forever to reach a comfortable temperature, passes this brief second of happiness before you have had time to realize that it has attained it, and continues mounting to unknown degrees in a truly alarming manner, beyond the possibility of control.

The institution was imported, it is said, some hundred and fifty years ago, from China; but, like all conveniences or luxuries, was appropriated solely to his Majesty's use for the space of seventy years after its introduction. Then, for some recondite and unprecedented reason, he vouchsafed its general domestication to his people. It is matter of wonder that he did grant its use; for in the first place, they had lived comfortably without it for centuries, and might with equal reason be

considered capable of continuing to do so for centuries to come, and in the second place, it was the first and last of such royal gifts. It was given perhaps simply because it was imported; his native-born architectural privileges he has never resigned, as we shall see later on.

We now reach at last the building itself. In its construction ideas taken from China are blended with native practices that have survived the deluge of Chinese customs.

A house of the highest order is nothing but a wooden framework, — a roof supported upon a few wooden posts, one at each corner and one in the middle of each side. Eight posts — or more after the same plan, if the building be large — are all that is really fixed; but it is only in the heat of summer that it can be seen in this skeleton-like condition. In winter no eye would suspect that it could be so airy. It stands to all appearance a solid structure; but a little inspection shows its sides to consist of a series of folding doors, a pair between each two posts. The posts are plain; but the outside of the doors is very prettily latticed, and the effect is as of fine ornamented woodwork. These folding doors open outward, and fasten from within by a ring and knob arrangement. So far they resemble ordinary doors. But they possess another beauty particularly their own. The whole affair, doors and appurtenances together, takes off, its hinges remaining fixed at its upper end, and is triced up to hooks on the ceiling, when the heats of summer make the air a welcome visitor.

This style of room is more particularly for official purposes and entertainments than for domestic use. All places designed for festivity are so constructed, and in each of the larger or finer compounds are one or two such houses, which correspond to withdrawing-rooms or banqueting-halls.

For purposes of habitation a somewhat different plan is followed. Instead of continuous doors, the sides are half wall,

half door, the walls being wooden, or in the poorer houses made of mud. In these buildings we have an elaborate system of threefold aperture-closers, — a species of three skins, only that they are for consecutive, not simultaneous use. The outer is the folding door above-mentioned; the other two are a couple of pairs of sliding panels, — the survivors in Korea of the once common sliding screens, such as are used to-day in Japan. One of the pairs is covered with dark-green paper, and is for night use; the other is of the natural yellowish color of the oil-paper, and is used by day. When not wanted, they slide back into grooves inside the wall, whence they are pulled out again by ribbons fastened near the middle of the outer edge. All screens of this sort, whether in houses or palanquins, are provided, unlike the Japanese, with these conveniences for tying the two halves of each pair together and thus enabling easier adjustment. The Japanese screens, being much larger and heavier, do not need it.

The interior, the lining, of the house is paper, oil-paper, — paper on the six sides by which the rectangular space is bounded. Paper covers the ceiling, lines the walls, spreads the floor. As you sit in your room, your eye falls upon nothing but paper; and the very light that enables you to see anything at all sifts in through the same material. It is a soft, diffused light, but not a faint one; it is only from the absence of sharp contrasts that you would know that it was not glass that gave it you. Buried, cut off from the outer world, you forget that there is such a thing as a landscape without. You do not miss it. Only when you do at last push aside the screens, it comes upon you like a new sensation, instead of getting somewhat dulled by being continuously seen as a picture framed by the window jambs.

There is another charm about these paper windows which no transparent glass, however pure, could ever give.

Of the spells which Nature weaves around us to conjure up the vanished past, none are more potent than the effects of light. We call it sometimes atmosphere, and truly; for it is this ever-changing gauzy envelope which surrounds us, that tinges to us a light which else had been invariable. Still, the atmosphere is but the means to color the light, and anything else that colored it could play the same *rôle*. Just as truly as it is light that enables us to distinguish anything at all, so true is it that it is the quality of the light that gives to a landscape its own peculiar tone of feeling. Objects are facts; but it is the medium through which we see that gives us our fancies, and it is by our fancies, not our facts, generally that we remember. Every now and then, at the promptings of her own caprice, Nature grants us these vistas of waking dreamland. Let but the light which falls upon a landscape recall some other scene, be the objects themselves ever so dissimilar, and straightway those objects fade away before the scene which memory has conjured up.

In a Korean house man has made it possible to summon such visions at will. He has but to choose the paper of his screens. According to the degree in which it has been steeped in oil, whether more or less, will it be yellower or whiter, and flood the room with corresponding light; and it is singular to notice how the effect of what we commonly call atmosphere, thus artificially produced, lies solely in color.

In one of the rooms of my house there were three windows. The first was fitted with screens whose paper was of a pale white; and as I sat there of a morning, withdrawn as effectually from the outside world and all its sensations as though I had been thousands of miles away, the light of a winter's day shone on all around. I seemed to see the snow-covered landscape, the clear bright blue above; I could almost feel the crisp, cold air; and yet there was nothing but common light falling

through a bit of translucent paper, and I was as warm as I could wish.

My eyes wandered to another corner, and fell upon the light from a second screen. Its color was a pale yellow, and through this sifted in the mellow glow of a summer's afternoon. All at once became languid and drowsy and warm. Nature seemed to be taking her mid-year siesta. I felt the universal hush of repose, and there rose before me the rich fulness of the year in its prime. It required an effort to realize that without, the thermometer stood at ten above our zero, and that the year my senses were showing me had not yet been born.

My gaze wandered again, and I was looking at the third, where a deeper tint struggled through the latticed screens. It fell on familiar objects like the flush of parting day. The sun seemed to be smiling me adieu. Bathed in the warm glow, I watched the glory in the west, expecting it momentarily to fade away, when — I accidentally turned my head, and, like the inconsequence of a dream, it all vanished, and I was sitting in my room in the middle of the day, the sport of Korean paper.

So much for the setting of the interior. As for furniture there is none. There are a few decorations, — a screen or some hanging pictures, — and occasionally the side of a room or the panel of some interior sliding-door will be painted in scenes. In one corner on the floor are wadded quilts, made of silk or cotton, an inch or two thick, upon which the occupant or his guests sit. At meal-times small tables, a foot high and a little more than a foot square, are brought in, one for each person, and removed again, the repast over. In each house there is usually a large bureau, with three or four cupboards, closed by doors that fold outward. It is the only thing which can be in any sense construed as furnishing; and in the manufacture of this one article, thanks perhaps to a concentration

of energy, the Koreans excel. The bureau is made of wood resembling polished mahogany, and studded with brass around the locks and the corners. A very favorite form for these brasses is a butterfly. Though Korea resembles the insect in shape, I was unable to discover any subtile cause for the pattern, and was invariably told that it was chosen simply for its natural beauty. In winter a brazier of live charcoal may, though by no means always does, complete the picture.

And now we come to that part of the building in which lies its greatest claim to beauty,—the roof. It is unique. No dome, no minaret, no steeple that I have ever beheld, is, to my eyes, so simply beautiful. It is not in its ornament; for though it possesses its share of decoration, this rather takes away than adds. The charm lies in its grace of form. I had almost said Arcadian shape; for I mean it in the sense, as I hope to show it may be considered, of being in some sort born of Nature.

Two corresponding curves, concave toward the sky, fall away on either hand from the central ridgepole. The descent is at first abrupt, but grows less and less so till it ends at the eaves. In small houses the roof is single; but in larger ones there are many slopes, of different degrees of curvature, that overlap and lie like festoons in tiles, one above another. Now, it is in its concavity that the roof differs from most architectural coverings. Roofs, as we know them, are commonly built up of straight lines. When they are curved at all, as in domes and cupolas, the curves are convex without. That they are effective, is true; that they suggest the work they perform, is none the less so. The dome is impressive, but it looks as if it had been built for its purpose. It suggests, not a roof proper, but something else. The dome is to bridge over a space within, not to protect without; and this you feel. The feeling is a species of intellectual sense-perception of the harmonies of

physics. The dome fulfils what the mind insensibly demands of it in its position. But it does not satisfy what we crave in a roof. Properly considered, I think that everything natural is beautiful. Just as dirt has been well defined to be matter out of place, so ugliness might be called one of Nature's failures. It is only when a thing has been denied what it was meant to possess, that it can truly be spoken of as ugly. The desert is not ugly, though it may wholly lack what we admire in a mountain. Now this applies to a certain extent to architecture. We always look through the form to the intent; and therefore to me the most beautiful roofs, as roofs, are these sloping watersheds of the far-East. This last expression is important, for it is in this light that we should regard them. Roofs are to shed the rain and keep off the sun. For the latter purpose curves and straight lines are equally effective; but for the former it can be shown that for rain falling upon the ridgepole, the curves necessary to shed it the quickest or with the least wear and tear are very like what we have before us; and though the rain is not so obliging as to fall only where it will produce the simplest problem, on the ridgepole, the eye assumes instinctively that it does.

Then there is another way of looking at it. Any flexible material, such as originally would be found in the tent, suspended at the top and eaves, would hang somewhat after the fashion of the present roof; and it has been suggested that we have here a sort of crystallization of what was mobile, if we may say so, in primeval times. This is no doubt its genealogy.

Houses of the lower class are covered with thatch; in the higher, the roof is made of scroll tiles. These tiles are so named from being of the form of half-unrolled scrolls. They are made of burnt clay, and their color is a bluish brown. They are set on a layer of black mud, rich in seeds; and as, once set, they are never disturbed till age and decay render

further living under them an impossibility, the seeds thrive there as they would in the garden beneath. Even under the tiles the seeds feel the warmth, and in some subtile manner they find loopholes to escape up into the light; and thus they come to cover the roofs with a growth of grass, — a growth which in summer decks the sober tiles with brilliant spots of color from its flowers, and even in winter leaves them not wholly bare, for the clinging of the old stems and stalks which the snow itself cannot dislodge.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

FAR-EASTERN art draws its inspiration from Nature, not from man. It thus stands, in the objects of its endeavor, in striking contrast to what has ever been the main admiration and study of our own, the human figure. A flower, a face, — matter as it affects mind, mind as it affects matter, — from such opposite sources spring the two. Art, or the desire to perpetuate and reproduce the emotions, must of course depend upon the character of those emotions. Now, to a far-Oriental Nature is more suggestive and man less so than with us for two reasons, — the greater impersonality of the race and the lower position of woman. Both physically and mentally woman has never awakened them to feeling. They have neither admired her form, nor has she been suggestive of fancy. That the first of these neglects is not due to any false modesty is evident at once from the condition of things in Japan, where the female form is more exposed and less displayed than in any other part of the world on the same parallel of latitude. It is simply that her figure never has struck them as so very beautiful. On the other hand, mentally they have never given her attention enough to learn to love her.

What their neglect of woman has accomplished directly, impersonality has no less potently brought about indirectly. While the one took away what is to us a stimulus, the other

helped them the more easily and completely to turn to Nature and find in her the satisfying of that instinctive craving to admire and to love.

But I do not purpose here to attempt an essay on Japanese or Korean art. The subject is far too vast and far too interesting to be hastily treated, and too far-Eastern to be at once appreciated. I would but point out here certain curious specimens of one form of it, — landscape gardening. One of the most remarkable of these specimens is the lotus pond, a sort of water-garden.

To a people who draw their inspiration to poesy not from the depths of woman's eyes, but from the smile that lies on the face of Nature, it is specially appropriate that water should seem the crowning glory of all scenery. No wonder that, above other men, they feel the influence which we attempt to express in the saying that "water is to a landscape what eyes are to a face." For to them the words convey no mere analogy; they represent as direct an effect in the one case as in the other. The race is in love with Nature; and what is more like human glances than the sparkle of the brook or the ever-varying expression on the surface of a pond? Is there not in some still, dark bit of water the same mysterious fascination the French find in *les yeux voilées d'une femme;* and do not both, as questioning their secrets you peer into their depths, yield you back, mockingly, but an image of yourself?

Far-Orientals not only court Nature as she deigns to show herself to them; they espouse her, and make her their own. Landscape gardening in the far-East is carried, in ordinary every-day routine, to a perfection of beauty quite undreamt of with us. The fame of Japan in this respect has gone throughout the world; and though to such a point of excellence Korea cannot attain, she still is imbued with the same spirit, and can show of the art much that is to us unknown. Man and Nature

have conspired to prevent her full development. A colder climate, a more killing winter, have not been without their effect; and man has not enjoyed so freely the opportunities of liberty in the peninsula as across the straits. The inducement among the common people to labor for beauty is wanting, for what they create may not remain their own; yet even here a kindred desire prompts to expression, though the forms it has chosen have differed from those of its island neighbor.

One variety of what we find in Korea might, without impropriety, be called waterscape gardening. It is so pre-eminently a gardening in which land is second in effect. In Japan a pond, where possible, is the central attraction; but in Korea it is the all in all. The grounds, if narrow strips deserve such a name, are only settings to the picture.

The garden, then, is a pond, and it is known by the name of the lotus pond; for so universal is the cultivation of the lotus in these artificial waters that it has given them their distinctive name. Even where, for some reason, it is not grown, it is assumed to exist; and the pond is called the lotus pond just the same.

The pond may be of any shape, though approximating generally to the form of a circle. It is of all sizes, from a little basin to a broad sheet of water. Sometimes its banks are only what still remains of bordering earth; sometimes they are encased in stone settings, layer upon layer, of large granite blocks. But always, if the pond be of any size at all, there stands in its centre a singular island. This islet is perfectly circular, and in the middle of it there rises a solitary tree. In finish it is treated like the borders of the pond,—left plain where they are plain, stone-capped if they are so. The tree is usually a fine old specimen of a plant, and is deciduous, not evergreen. Its branches spread out beyond the confines of its little home, and

overhang the water. It is a pretty sight, — the lone tree on the round islet; but this, on the first look, is lost sight of, for the way its singular symmetry piques the curiosity. It has a preternaturally artificial effect. It looks like one of the trees from a child's Noah's ark. It utterly despises apparently the *ars celare artem*, — the attempt to deceive you into even a momentary belief that it grew there of itself; and it courts and wins attention from its very effrontery. "What can it mean?" is a question you instinctively ask of yourself and then of others.

Use, not beauty, is the cause of its being. The idea is no quaint conceit; and there are good reasons, though not artistic ones, for its having taken precisely the form it has. This is its *raison d'être*.

To those enjoyable qualities, the gift of Nature, which the Korean finds in the little lake, he has added the attraction of fishing. For after the main fact that it exists, — its own greatest charm, — the chief attribute of the pond is that it is a fish-pond. It is profusely stocked with carp for the pleasure of the noble fisherman to whom the pond belongs, — not, indeed, as pets to be fed, but as game to be eaten. Now, to angle for these from the bank is a pastime always possible, of course; but such is not to Korean ideas the height of enjoyment of the sport. To remain upon the outskirts savors, to their thinking, of the stranger, not of the lord and master of the place. To be himself at the very centre of the whole, this to him is the acme of dignified happiness. To afford him, therefore, a spot in the middle where to sit, he made the island; and to protect him from the sun while in the enjoyment of his vantage-ground, he planted the tree. Sheltered, shaded, one side is as much to be desired as another; and so the necessity for symmetry made of the seat a circle. I know of no trait more deliciously Eastern than is typified by this act, — the coercing

of Nature to furnish you both amusement and the comfort wherewith fully to appreciate it at the same time.

Hither, of a hot, still summer afternoon, the Korean betakes himself, with his rod and books, and seats himself upon the short grass under the friendly shade of the chestnut-tree. Not without difficulty has a servant forced his skiff through the thick water-growth which in places has seemingly transformed into land the glassy surface of the lake; for it is the flowering season of the lotus. Where in the spring only the broad dark-green leaves floated lazily upon the surface with just enough of vitality to float and nothing more, mirroring the languor of the warm spring air, now the spot is choked by the wanton luxuriance of vegetation. Other leaves, unlike the former, sturdy, thick, stand erect on their tall stems two feet above the water's level, hustling one another for the crowd and holding in jealous embrace the stately solitary flowers. Away down among the labyrinth of pillars, the stems that lie hid in the depths of the water, swim about the lazy carp, rising every now and then, where the plants permit the pond to see the sunlight, to snatch with a gurgle some unwary insect that, oblivious to fate, has been thoughtlessly skimming the water's edge. A drowsy heat pervades the motionless air, the leaves of the tree forget to rustle, and the man himself is as motionless as they. There he sits in quiet contemplation, a mummy in meditation. Nothing breaks in upon his long day-dream save when, for a brief moment, a fish after innumerable nibbles, which were too lazy to disturb his reverie, at last insists upon being caught.

To the fisherman, at least, it is a dream of peace, and the lotus is the barrier that shuts out for him the world. It matters not to him whether his pond be large or tiny, or that night, as it falls, will close his communion with Nature and drive him once more to intercourse with man. To him, unlike Kant, time and space are not forms of consciousness.

Another very striking peculiarity of Korean landscape gardening is the rock-work. In every well-ordered garden are to be seen certain curious-looking rocks, from three to five feet high, set up on end. They are either planted in the ground, or else they rest upon flat slabs of polished stone. The material of which the rocks consist is not over-hard, for it has been honey-combed, evidently by the action of water, into the most fantastic shapes. From these shapes it is at once evident that the rocks were not indigenous where they are at present found, even in those instances where no pedestal betrays the handiwork of man They suggest at first, from their dignified position, some religious intent; but this instinctive tribute to their sanctity is a misconception. They are put up simply for purposes of ornament. Accustomed as the traveller gets to finding religion the key to the mystery of all strange sights in out-of-the-way lands, it is no wonder that in a land without a religion he should be constantly the dupe of his own acquired sagacity.

The far-Eastern idea of beauty has in it a little of the fantastic. In many of its expressions there is a touch of the odd, not to say the weird. This is well exemplified in these rock-forms. To our eyes they are more grotesque than beautiful. If such expression were possible, they might be spoken of as a mass of holes and hollows, — cup-shaped holes and perforated hollows like the centre of an anchor-ring, — such effects as the whirls of running water invariably produce; and though in detail they are made up of curves, the effect of the whole is surprisingly angular, — an amusing instance of the whole being something quite different from the sum of its parts.

One of the commonest of the foreign criticisms upon far-Eastern art is to say that it is conventional. It is difficult to fix exactly what is meant by this. If by conventional is meant

that the ideas typified by art are few in number, such must necessarily be the fact from the nature of the case. Art there having its mainsprings wholly in Nature, and not at all or very sparingly in humanity, that inexhaustible treasure-house to us, the actions of men, is by them unopened. *Sujets de genre* are of the most limited description, and even when introduced at all are not considered the highest form of art. Nor are what are there delineated worthy such a position; for the truly artistic, or I may better say the most artistic, — for all, even the humblest, are beautiful in some way, — the most artistic then of the aspects of humanity are by them passed by, ignored, or what is worse, unknown. Nature alone is studied and loved. This at once limits art, which is the expression of feeling, to what each man can see in Nature; and such feelings must be expressed in her own terms. These two factors reacting upon each other leave but a limited range of symbols, so to speak. But if by conventional is meant — and from the explanations made on the subject it would seem is meant — an artificial method of representation, then the remark is simply false. It is however pardonable, because on the surface plausible; and the only reason why it continues to be made, is that the men who make it have never compared their statements with the facts. Far from being artificial, far-Eastern art is emphatically natural. The reason that it does not so appear to us at first, is due to two causes. The first is very simple, — an absence with us of what the far-Oriental sees around him at home. A picture of snow-peaks would undoubtedly appear conventional, in the sense used above, to a man who had dwelt all his life on the plains, and never heard of such things as white-headed mountains. The second cause is that certain very salient features of his landscapes have engrossed the far-Oriental attention, to the partial neglect of other less striking but perhaps even more common scenes.

Every traveller knows the effect of this in other things beside art. Narrators insensibly, if not on purpose, pick out the salient points of any land, to give an idea of it to those to whom it is an undiscovered country. The result is, that on acquaintance no country seems so odd as imagination, fed on a few startling facts, has pictured it to be; and yet, for all that, the facts may be perfectly true. Now, what we do to give others an idea of foreign lands, the far-Oriental does to give himself an idea of his own. His art, by reason of this strong simplicity, is all the higher art.

Now, the rock-forms are a very good instance of such wrongly imputed conventionality. They are continually introduced into Korean painting. They are there so grotesque-looking as to seem impossible, and in hasty sketches they not infrequently suggest to an unaccustomed eye an indiscriminate conglomerate of brush strokes; but it is not in the painting, but in nature, that the strangeness lies. The effect differs in the two only inasmuch as it is always a necessity in art to change in order truly to portray.

Another instance of this is to be found in the gnarled, scraggy, weird far-Eastern pine-tree. It is one of the most striking and, when you become used to it, one of the most beautiful objects in their scenery. In its bark it reminds you of the yellow pine of California, and is probably a closely related species, though about this I cannot pretend to speak authoritatively. The yellow pine is familiarly known, from the peculiarity of its bark, as the alligator pine, — a name which is almost unpleasantly happy. The bark of the far-Eastern species is somewhat the same in form, but in color is deeper, — of a fine bronze. But this is the least of the tree's peculiarities. It is in its branches that it is especially queer. Possessed usually of but few of these, it shoots them out, regardless of their scanty, poverty-struck appearance, with the most reckless

disregard of direction. Sometimes they grow up, sometimes down, and at all angles between the two, never hesitating for a moment to change their previous direction when a fancy seizes them. The result is, that simply to say they are utterly without grace would be, by implication, to praise them for beauty of form. They are simply impossible for eccentricity. This is precisely what the foreign critics say of their faithful portraiture. One of the great occasions for stamping Japanese painting as conventional has been this very tree. We see it constantly in their art, and we refuse to believe it aught but a caricature until our own eyes have shown us the original, — odder, if anything, than the copy.

To take one more example. The crags with the mist shrouding their bases, which we so commonly meet with in their paintings, are at first supposed to exist only in the fertile imaginations of the artists. Not in the least. On a favorably misty morning just such effects can be seen by him who chooses to go out and look.

All this has tended to teach the Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans that the odd forms a great part of the beautiful; so when they undertake to make scenery for themselves, they copy the idea.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PALACES.

IT was a bright, warm winter's day, — one of those days when we realize how true it is that we pay dearly for anything out of season, weather included; for the very heavenly character of everything overhead caused it to become all the more earthly (*anglice*, muddy) underfoot. A prey to the painful contrast between the state of my feelings and of my feet, I passed up between the two stone lions that guard the entrance to the Old Palace in Söul. These two great beasts are imposing granite monuments, seated on huge pedestals of like material. They are called Chinese lions rather by courtesy than appearance, for they are an imported bit of dignity. They belonged, in idea, originally to China; but the expression of the idea was so happy that Japan in her turn copied them from Korea, and in so doing, called them Korean dogs, showing how little faith is to be put in their implied resemblance to any particular animal. Besides, there never were any lions in China. Their personalities are undoubtedly more useful than distinctive. They are placed in their present position to scan all comers, and devour such as are wickedly disposed. They evidently knew their business, for they suffered me to pass.

Once safely through this test of moral character, I was met by one of the secretaries of the Foreign Office, who had kindly proposed to show me the Old Palace. He was a tall, gaunt

man, and strongly attached to a certain Korean official fashion, — the wearing of huge, round-eyed spectacles, set with plain glass in lieu of lenses. The fact that they impeded his vision, he cheerfully suffered for the sake of the imposing effect they produced; and he only took them off in those odd moments when he preferred to see rather than be seen. He now ordered one of the three doors of the outer gateway to be swung open, and we entered. We passed under the right-hand arch; the approach of state would have lain through the central one. But occasions of state have, for the present, passed away from the Old Palace; for it is now deserted. It was formerly the abode of the Tè Wang Kun, for many years regent, and since his violent kidnapping by Li Hung Chang, the Viceroy of Shanghai, has remained in neglected emptiness. The present king cared not to move from the palace he had occupied as the royal minor; for his associations with the regent, his own father, were not of the pleasantest. So, after the sudden catastrophe, what is known as the New Palace became the seat of the court. The complicated relationship between the Tè Wang Kun and the reigning sovereign used to throw my attempts at Korean royal genealogy into great confusion. The present king succeeded to the throne in direct line of descent; and yet, owing to his tender years, he appointed his own father regent, — a position the latter found so congenial that he refused to let it go. There was, therefore, no love lost between the two. The fact was, the present king had been adopted by the preceding monarch, so that he had ceased, by law, to be the son of his own father as much as he had ceased in heart to feel the tie.

The appearance of the place sadly bespoke its desertion. We found ourselves in an immense courtyard, or park, covered, the greater part of it, with a sparse grass. Through the middle of the park ran a broad paved pathway, about sixty feet

wide, over which in places the grass was beginning once more to reclaim its sway. This avenue stretched from the archway at which we had entered to another similar structure at the other end of the park. Owing to the fact that the gates of both of these were closed, the full majesty of this entrance to the royal presence was lost. Seen in its entirety, it would have been most imposing. As a paved way, it started without, at the stone lions, ran up a gentle incline to the outer gate, and then passed successively through three gateways and two park-like courts until it emerged at last into a third, in the centre of which, raised on a terrace of earth, stood the Audience Hall. Throughout its length it was perfectly straight, in truly magnificent contrast to the ordinary road. As an unpaved way it extended farther still; for outside, beyond the lions, there spread away a broad avenue to the distance of half a mile. As for the gateways, they were not simply entrances, but ceremonial entrances, of the same general type as the city gates, but finer, with massive stone foundations, triply pierced, and crowned with large wooden buildings. They were almost as grand as the Audience Hall itself. At this my first visit I quite missed the effect of the unity; for we were conducted through so many lesser gateways and courts, off to one side, and were taken so many turnings, that I lost all idea of direction, and when at last we emerged by a side-entrance before the Audience Hall, I had no conception left of its relative bearing to any other part of the vast enclosure. Around this last and most sacred of the great courts ran what, for a better word, I may call cloisters. They were a sort of half-way stage between the enclosing wall, pure and simple, and what in Korea, in course of time, it invariably develops into, — a continuous line of houses, occupied usually by servants. Stretching inward from the cloisters came the grass, and then a terrace of earth, bordered by a stone parapet, and in the centre of all the hall. In certain ways it is the finest building

in Korea, its only rival being the Palace of Summer. It would be a fine building anywhere in the world. It has the grandeur of unity. As I did not measure it, I shall let the reader judge for himself of the size, by comparing it with a man who stands without on the steps. He will then realize the effect of the interior, when I say that the whole is one single room, and there is nothing in it but the throne.

This Audience Hall exemplifies some of the curious ceremonial laws in reference to building. The wooden pillars that support what would be the first story were there a second, are all circular. This proclaims it a royal structure. No one but the king may have them of that form; others must have them square. Some of the ancient mathematicians would have delighted in the reason given for this practice. It is because the circle is a more perfect figure than the square; for earth is square, heaven round. Why exactly the opposite rule should hold in the case of the rafters is not quite evident; for there to the king belongs the square, to the people the round. I failed to discover the reason of the incongruity; still, it is a poor rule that will not work both ways.

The broad flight of stone steps was another perquisite of royalty, befitting his Majesty's social eminence. Three are deemed sufficient elevation for the average mortal's abode; more than that cost him his head.

After we had admired the Audience Hall, within and without, we retreated again through the gate by which we had entered, and walking down a long open corridor, or lane, between high walls, came most unexpectedly upon a lamentable scene of desolation. Large blocks of stone, which Nature had not yet covered with her mantle of respectability, lay one upon another in purposeless confusion; in another place a pile of bricks suggested some dilapidated pyramid; while here and there the most unsightly holes beggared even Nature to rival

them. There is, indeed, something terribly desolate in the ruins of a past fire, for such we saw before us at that moment; and yet it had all happened many years ago, so they told us.

It was a great relief to turn from this scene into a little gateway that gave admittance to the enclosure known as the Palace of Summer. It is the finest example of the lotus pond in Korea. Two stone causeways span the narrowest part of the pond, joining the central island to the grounds without. Upon this rises, not a tree, but a superb building, supported by forty-eight monolithic columns. Fine as the building is, it is quite inferior to its own foundation; for all this magnificent display of columns is nothing but a foundation, which does not properly constitute a part of the building at all. It is not the only preface which has been the chief merit of the work itself. There are in the pond other islands, smaller and after the usual type; and around them all sleeps the lazy water, when in the hot summer afternoons the queen and her court ladies come to sit in the cool breezes that blow down from the high peaks of the Cock's-comb. From this custom the place took its name. Now, however, it was an ice-garden; and the white winding-sheet lay dotted with the dead leaves and bell-shaped seed-vessels of last year's imprisoned lotus.

Mounting to what I can hardly refrain from calling the second story, though it was really only a propped-up *rez de chaussée*, we wandered around the broad piazza, gazing at the lotus pond, the palace grounds, and the North Hill rising conically beyond, while away in the further distance the barren range of peaks looked down upon us, as if in answer. The sides of this piazza were of carved wood, and the whole was as elaborate as anything in Sönl, which, however, is not saying much, as decoration of any form is not a feature of Korean art. The royal monopolies are probably the cause of this; for, as an instance, I may say that only on the king's buildings is

paint ever allowed. The wonderful taste of Japan is quite wanting in Korea.

We descended, and after wandering through several grass-grown alleys, where the calm of the morning seemed indeed to sleep, and meandering over some veritable parks, but all hemmed in by walls that hesitated not to scale the slopes of the North Hill, we retraced our steps, and to my surprise at last found ourselves at the outer gate.

Here my kind guide got into a dilapidated jinrikisha, of which he was more proud than of the finest palanquin, and in which he was most unmercifully jolted as he rattled slowly away, leaving me with a parting memory of huge amber spectacles bobbing unceremoniously up and down, while their owner sat ill at ease, trying his best to look comfortable and dignified.

Fully a mile away from the Old Palace lies what is called the New Palace, — that collection of grounds and buildings which is at present the abode of the reigning sovereign of Korea. Strictly speaking, the title is in both parts a misnomer; for the place, so called, is neither new, nor is it exactly what in Western parlance would be styled a palace, and yet to Korean thought it is both. Its age is comparative merely, as indeed must be that of everything which does not contain within itself a term of life. In this case the comparison is with what is known at the present time as the Old Palace. But there is also a certain absolute justice in this last name; for the Old Palace could not possibly be any older, placed where it is. It is coeval with the beginning of the present state of things. It dates from the founding of the city of Söul, now hard upon the five hundredth anniversary of its coming into existence. The New Palace was laid out some hundred years later, and is therefore about four centuries old at the present time. In consequence of being later built, it occupies a somewhat less

honorable position than the older one ; for even position has its allotted ceremonial in Korea. North, east, west, and south, — this is the relative rank of the four cardinal points. In etiquette the sovereign always faces the south, and his subjects look to the north. Following the same rule, the post of honor generally, on all occasions of ceremony, such as dinners or feasts, is at the northern end of the room. A singular practice this of determining by exterior terrestrial phenomena the etiquette of entertainments carried on within four walls, which are themselves in no wise subjected to orientation, and may face any direction indifferently according to the fancy of the owner.

When the city of Söul was laid out, therefore, the palace was given the post of honor, — the northern end of the space enclosed by the city's wall ; and when the second palace came to be built, it was placed as nearly north as was possible, consistently with the position of the older one, to whose left, to one facing the city, it lay.

Exactly what was the origin of this custom of allotting a rank among themselves to the cardinal points, it would be interesting to know. We may perhaps look to some rude astronomy for an explanation. Like the Pyramids, it may, in its way, be the relic of an old study of the stars. Certainly, early man could hardly have failed to be struck by the sight that while all else in the heavens moved, the pole alone remained in dignified repose. The Koreans themselves suggest a more earthly origin for the practice. Because the south is the bright, the warm, and therefore the happy region of the earth, they say, the king sits so that he may always face it. When we call to mind the cold winters of those lands whence the far-Eastern peoples migrated, as well as those to which they afterwards came and which they now inhabit, we realize how instinctive this turning in body, as in thought, toward the south would naturally be.

The New Palace was originally built as a residence for the Crown Prince, or, to speak more accurately, the heir apparent; for in Korea the heir to the throne is chosen by the king during his life, and is not necessarily born to the position, though it is customary for his Majesty to so designate his eldest son. This is, no doubt, a reason for the superiority, architecturally, of the other, the older one. But the newer possesses a charm of its own, first from the uneven character of the ground over which it rambles, and secondly from being much less artificially laid out. It is also somewhat the larger of the two, in the extent of ground it covers. The high wall, which surrounds it, encloses about a thousand acres. In this wall are set gates at various points, fourteen of them in all. There is no symmetry in their arrangement, nor is there any in the line of wall itself, which meanders about in so aimless a fashion as to cause surprise when at last it ends by meeting itself again. The gates, or archways, are quite as various in size and honor, as they are unsymmetrical in position, — a fact typified by their names, which range through all the grades of esteem from that of "The Gate of Extensive Wisdom" to "The Moon Viewing Gate." The fourteen are only outer gates; within are innumerable others, and no gate is without a name. Sometimes the names are simply æsthetic; sometimes they are moral sentiments taken from Confucianism. The inner life of the people is so entirely in theory only a mixture of the two ideas, — the good and the beautiful, and the veneration for a name so universal, — that there is no structure above the most ordinary and common kind but has its distinct ennobling proper name.

Then as to the second half of the title, the term "palace," the place is not so much a palace as a collection of palaces. Within is a very labyrinth of buildings, courts, and parks. There are audience halls for the king and the heir apparent; then the separate palaces in which they respectively live; then

the queen's apartments, whose size may be imagined from the several hundred court ladies, of various positions, who are constantly in attendance upon her, and whom no male eye, save his Majesty's, is ever permitted to see. Each of these sets of houses is approached by its own series of courtyards and dependent buildings.

But perhaps the chief beauty of the spot lies in the grounds — half gardens, half parks — which occupy the space not otherwise built over. It is a peculiarity of the far-East that the domestication of Nature — to use a term which seems best to express the artificial shaping of Nature to man's private enjoyment — is carried to the happy half-way point between the two extremes common with us, and which are represented by the park, on the one hand, where we shape very little, and the flower-garden on the other, where we mould a great deal too much. This is perhaps best shown in Japan. The grounds that a Japanese delights to wander through are an adaptation or a copy of the features of a real landscape, reduced to a convenient scale or left of the natural size, according to circumstances, and introduced where he desires them to exist, but are in no sense the conventional museum style of arrangement we adopt in the fashioning of our flower-gardens. Nothing would strike them as more inartistic than a collection of plants, however beautiful individually, arranged in a manner so wholly unnatural. Such a collection with them can be seen, and can only be seen, in the show grounds of a florist, and affects them as an ordinary shop window does us. In consequence, they more particularly affect the flowering shrubs to a comparative neglect of the annuals. Perhaps Nature has helped them to the custom by producing the finest specimens of such shrubs to be seen anywhere in the world.

In Korea there is wanting the humanizing touch of the Japanese, which seems to transform the soil of their islands into

an almost sentient bit of earth; for in Japan there is perhaps nothing more striking than this semi-human look of the landscape. In Korea, in lieu of this there is a certain air of decaying grandeur; for in the finest gardens stone-work, grown more or less dilapidated with age, encases that bit of water which, as we have seen, is the *motif* of the whole.

Scattered, therefore, through the half-garden, half-park, are several of these "lotus ponds," set in a curbing of granite, with islands bordered in like fashion. In the same manner the brooks are confined and fringed, and are spanned by stone bridges at intervals; and yet so well done is the work, that it seems in keeping with its surroundings. At all points where a particularly pretty bit of landscape presents itself, is found a summer house; for a Korean does not combine the idea of exercise with the enjoyment of Nature, and prefers to drink in the scenery where at the same time he can sip his tea.

Over the greater part of the scene is visible the artistic touch of neglect. Time and weather have parted the stones from one another, and they now show gaping fissures where all was once smooth. Weeds and grass are trying to throw their green mantle over what they may; and in spite of its name, in spite of man who inhabits it, ruin, in its incipient stage, seems peculiarly to be the genius of the spot.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A CHAPTER OF HORRORS.

THE age of bodily adventures has wellnigh passed away; even the age of adventurers is no longer in its prime. The age of brass, like the age of iron, has given place to the age of gold. Perhaps it is not wholly an uncompensated loss that society, like everything else in the universe, should tend to a state of equilibrium. Adventures, in the old-fashioned sense, happen now commonly only to fools or detectives, — to those, that is, who make them by not minding their own business or to those who make it their business to mind them. Adventures must now, indeed, be tracked and hunted down in order to be met with, and most people have not the time necessary for the pursuit.

However painful the admission, therefore, it is sustained at least by the consciousness of being in harmony with the spirit of the times, that I confess to having no properly blood-curdling occurrences to relate. No chain of fateful circumstances ever forced me into a situation whence my fortunate escape has since remained a marvel even to myself, and no seemingly innocent premises ever landed me, to my then terror though subsequently reflected glory, in conclusions to blanch the cheeks of an appreciative audience. But one man in Korea ever showed me aught but extreme politeness and distinguished consideration; and that one himself furnished me the proof that at the time he

was in a condition in which he was not himself. So, without stopping to investigate his present identity, — a not over-pleasing one, — I handed over whoever he had come to be to the kind courtesy of a passing soldier, and passed on my way. Indeed, Korea is hardly the land for specific adventures; the fact of being there at all is its own most startling experience, and the continuous necessarily excludes the exceptional. The horrible is as near the adventurous as, unfortunately, I can come; and even what belongs to that falls perversely under the head of what I might have seen but did not. At the time the deed was committed, I was quietly smoking a pipe in my own study, in peaceful oblivion to my immediate possibilities. I thus missed a sensation.

It was on a certain day in January. The weather had set in for a thaw, and the roads were heavy. This partially accounts for my being snugly ensconced at home, instead of finding myself on one of the main thoroughfares, ankle-deep in mud, some little distance outside of the South Gate. Had I, however, been walking there on that subsequently memorable day, I should suddenly, without the slightest mental preparation, have stumbled across a most shocking spectacle. There, on one side of the highway, exposed to hideous publicity, lay thirty headless bodies. The heads had evidently been severed from the trunks by some sharp instrument, like a sword; and the blood, spouting from the arteries, had stained the ground a horrible red, and then gathered in crimson pools that were slowly congealing to purple. The bodies were still clothed as in life, and though decapitated were yet perfectly recognizable. The greater portion had once been men, but scattered among them could be distinctly made out the forms of women. No humane regard for sex, evidently, had stayed the hands that had done the deed. Around the spot had collected a curious few, in number sufficient to arrest the attention, but not

enough to hide the sight; and on their faces, where any expression was visible at all, a morbid interest disputed the place of a more fitting horror. To render the spectacle all the more ghastly, the ordinary traffic pursued its course within a few inches of the bodies, as if nothing uncommon had happened. Only occasionally some man whose clothes perhaps had brushed them a little closer than usual, or who happened to have been born more inquisitive than his fellows, would pause and stare for a moment on his way by; or a band of children, in a mad frolic, would run up against them inadvertently, and then hastily scamper away again with only the instinctive tribute of an involuntary shudder.

As if this were not hideous enough, a little farther along was the still more horrible complement of this horrible collection. Gathered in a place by themselves, in the midst of the mud, lay the missing heads. They had all been carefully carried away from the trunks to which they belonged, and then arranged with fiendish forethought in a long row by the wayside, their faces upturned to the passers-by as if on exhibition. What the feelings were of such as were unlucky enough to inhabit the houses in front of which they lay, can perhaps best be imagined; but however great their loathing, the owners had not dared to move the heads away. There they remained, confronting with their ghastly stare the living populace. In some the eyes were open, and gazed into vacancy with the same fearful expectancy with which they had awaited death, crystallized now into a set expression of unearthly horror; in others the lids had fallen, and the hair, matted with gore, gave to the face a look as of agony still felt; while about them all was that peculiar ghastliness of a dismembered body, — the ghastliness of matter that mimics mind. Is it the self-preservative instinct of life that renders parts of once living wholes so horrible to see, — and of all such, the most horrible, a face?

Scanned more closely, when this loathing was in some sort conquered, there was little in any way distinctive about these faces, nothing to mark beyond a doubt the characters of the victims. In such a sorry plight the good man and the villain inspire too much of horror in common to be recognizable. They were Koreans: that was all.

Who were these wretches? Was this the work of a band of highway-robbers in the darkness of the night before, or was it the bloody extinguisher to an uprising among the people? It was neither. It was nothing so unusual; it was simply the ordinary handiwork of the law. These unfortunates had some of them stolen as much as ten dollars' worth of something, and had been so unlucky as to be caught in the act. Some of them probably had stolen much less; but the law cannot discriminate between insignificant amounts, and they had then been eased by the law of that life which they had found so difficult to keep going. They had been mercifully treated withal; they had simply had their heads cut off. Had their crime been greater, or had they chanced to live a few years before, they would not have escaped from this world with so little discomfort to themselves.

The real horror of their doom consisted in lying exposed for three days in the public thoroughfare, — a horror rather for the living than the dead. Such was its object. After decapitation, the victims are cast by the officials upon the street, — the bodies in one place, the heads in another; and then for three days and three nights no man may touch either corpses or heads to take them away. For this length of time they are a spectacle none can avoid. All who pass that way, strangers or acquaintances alike, must perforce face the ghastly sight. After these three days of public horror, and only then, the relatives of the criminals are permitted to come and remove the bodies and bury them. To make crime as repellent as possible is the aim of the law.

The number of the beheaded — thirty here had been executed together — did not indicate, however, any undue proportion of crime in general, nor any excess at that time in particular. It was only a little matter of economy on the part of the Government. The Government finds it more convenient to delay the several executions till a sufficient number of criminals are collected on hand in the prison, and then to make one holocaust of the whole.

The crime of these men and women had been simple thieving. Whatever jurists may consider to have been demonstrated as wise in European legal punishments, it is certain that in the far-East, at least, the severity of the punishment is prohibitory to the indulgence of the crime. Actual thieving is very rare in Korea, as it is in Japan. I observed this with impersonal gratification with reference to the community at large and with much personal delight in my own instance. In spite of the confiding way in which I left my things about, I never had anything but a penknife stolen; and this too in the face of the fact that, however valueless to me, the simplest of my trinkets was to them an article of nearly priceless curiosity. When, one day, I discovered the loss of the above-mentioned penknife, I suggested, in joke to the Colonel, with whom I was at the time engaged in discussing this very question of capital punishment, that I should not object to having the fellow who stole it decapitated. To which, to my horror, he instantly replied, in perfect good faith, "And he would be, if we could only catch him." It was lucky for the poor devil that they never did succeed in finding him.

Murder, in the far-East, is also uncommon. It would seem that the passions there are not so violent as with us; and this is probably due to centuries of education. The Buddhistic tenet of self-repression has undoubtedly something to do with it; and the low estimation in which woman is held, contributes

also to the result. At any rate, a mastery over the expression of the feelings, which inevitably tends to an extinction of the feelings themselves, is at present a marked characteristic of these races. There was but one murder during my stay in Söul, and that was not the deed of a Korean. The parts were cast the other way. The Korean, perhaps unfortunately for himself, was the murdered, not the murderer.

I learned of it one day as I was calling at the Japanese legation. It was at that moment the excitement of the hour; and the details were all the more eagerly discussed, because of the national hatred of the Japanese for the Chinese. For a Chinaman had done it. He was a soldier, — one of the many Chinese troops quartered, under the command of a Chinese general, a short distance outside of the east gate. Bands of them at times stroll into the city, and then wander about it in search of amusement. In one of these moments of recreation the fellow in question, together with some companions, entered a certain shop where provisions were sold, probably a restaurant of some sort. While there, he got into a row with the son of the place, — a mere lad, — and began to maltreat him. The father naturally came to the rescue of his son; and the Chinaman then seized his rifle, and in the scuffle that ensued, fired several shots promiscuously at both of them, wounding the father and killing the son. The affair made quite a stir in the neighborhood; and the Chinese general, in consequence, investigated the matter, and I believe had the man decapitated.

The law is much mitigated in rigor from what it was formerly. Then the most cruel of punishments were inflicted for all but venial offences. This mitigation is not due to any direct influence from abroad, whether Chinese, Japanese, or European, but to a change which has slowly crept over the spirit of the land. That it was suggested by foreign ways is of course possible; but it would seem rather to be a gradual,

spontaneous evolution, working more slowly but as surely in this little community, shut off by itself, as in the great world outside. There are to be found many other instances of the same spirit at work, during the last centuries of isolation. But there is one feature about the change which is suggestive and, were such an adjective possible scientifically, sad. It has been a spirit of death, not of life. Old customs have passed away, but no new ones have arisen to take their place. It has been the gradual dying of the motion of the pendulum of life, where, in the absence of fresh motives to exertion, natural indolence is slowly and surely bringing it to rest.

As it is but a step from the sublimity of horror to the ludicrousness of a Korean fight, I feel inclined to take it, and all the more that it is the one turning aside from the path of wisdom of this quiet, dignified people, the one flaw in their deeply ingrained philosophy of courtesy, which is, after all, but another name for sense. For this reason alone, it is worthy a place in their chamber of horrors.

I was one day walking along one of the country roads, chewing the cud of reflection, in silent sympathy with the bulls I occasionally passed, as I mused upon the delightful contrast between the gentleness and urbanity of the East and the only too common rudeness and brutality of the West, when, as if to give the lie to my unspoken thought, I suddenly found myself face to face with the commonest of street fights. At the moment I arrived the combatants had reached, from their originally more dignified position, the humble level of mother earth, with a deplorable want of consideration for the only too easily tarnished purity of their garments. But this heedlessness was as nothing to the sorry plight to which each had reduced the other's headgear. For a Korean's pride lies in his coiffure, and he disarranges it as little as may be, even for ablutionary purposes. Unfortunately, it also constitutes his most

vulnerable spot; for it is long enough to afford excellent holding-ground for an opponent. It is therefore the first point of attack. As I came up, each of the two writhing masses of clothes — for Korean dresses are at all times most ample, and here caused a lamentable loss of identity to their respective owners — showed but a black mass of hair as a target for the adversary's vengeance. This had not failed of its mark; and each head was securely in the grasp of a not friendly hand, which was pulling at the locks most unmercifully. Some of them it had already pulled out, as the bunches of dark hair on the ground around amply testified. Coincidently the faces of the combatants were getting pretty well scarred and maltreated. Although many spectators, after thoroughly satiating their curiosity, had then felt impelled to attempt to separate the two, this praiseworthy intent was rendered, from the peculiar method of warfare, no easy task. To dislodge a hand firmly imbedded in a tangled mass of hair, while the head to which the hair belongs bobs about like a buoy in a rough sea, is a feat to tax the ingenuity of even an anxious friend, not to speak of lukewarm bystanders. Finally, more from want of strength on the part of the weaker combatant, and satisfied vengeance on the part of the stronger, than from any effectual assistance from the crowd, the fight eventually ceased or lulled, — I am not sure which, for at that point I came away.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE VALLEY OF CLOTHES.

ONE of the secretaries of the Japanese legation had discovered, in the course of his strolls in the neighborhood of the capital, a tidbit of scenery that he had straightway fallen in love with, and he was anxious to show it to me. It was a sort of shrine, he informed me, utterly alone amid the most desolate of landscapes; and then, in defence of his ideal, he added, by way of discounting beforehand any possible want of appreciation on my part, that perhaps it was too severe a spot to please a Western eye. Nevertheless, he proposed and promised it as the guerdon of a walk; and he hoped, he said, that I might love it with at least a little of the love he lavished upon it himself, — a love awakened by its very helpless, hopeless dreariness. The description of it was certainly not enticing; but still it was something to see, and still more something to see what it was that had so won the Japanese fancy: So one afternoon we set off to call, as in far-Eastern thought it would almost become, upon his inamorata; and we took my camera with us to immortalize her.

Our road carried us round the long lines of the Old Palace wall, majestically stretching out into perspective distance, and then across a northern corner of the great town, till at last it boldly attacked a hill, with only the least possible hesitation

of a turn on the way up, to gain for itself an exit through the northeast gate. One is always pleasingly reminded of the strategic importance of the wall on trying to leave the city anywhere on the north side, by the amount of toil involved in getting out.

The very name, a walled city, has in it the sound of romance. In these days a city's wall, if powerless to keep out the foe of the present, seems at least sufficient to shut in the memories of the past; and a wall that tops the crest of a natural rise has in it a touch of grandeur too. There is something impressive in the loneliness with which it stands out against the sky, something of infinity in the little bit of transparent blue its gate enframes. Ordinarily horizons are graduated, — the land and the sky merge into a common distance, until you forget that one is not a continuation of the other. But here your eye follows the ground a score of paces up before you, and then is launched into the lonely infinite expanse. As you mount, you seem to be approaching the end of the world, until, in an instant, there spreads out a panorama at your feet upon the further side.

In order the better to rest after our exertion in climbing the hill, we proceeded to add to its height by mounting to the second story of the gateway, and in this eyry-like pavilion sat down to enjoy the view, and incidentally to indulge in comments upon my companion's distant, and by him barely acknowledged, relatives, as they emerged, grotesquely foreshortened, from under the gate. Seen from where we sat, their appearance not unjustly provoked that reckless irony which is the tribute we pay to striking dissimilarity. First a hod of brushwood walked through, apparently of itself, and then began in the most dignified manner to descend the hill. Next a couple of huge hats did the same, nodding along side by side in most sociable proximity, — an affection due to their

great size compared with the heads beneath; and lastly, a more imposing individual on horseback emerged, on an amble, from under our feet, whose head seemed to us to be set on a pivot in the neck and to be worked by the heavy bob of a pendulum beneath, so regularly did it wag back and forth. So the procession passed. Thus debasingly was poor humanity transformed into peripatetic automata. At last, satiated with judging of mankind *de haut en bas*, we descended from our exalted station and walked through, ourselves.

On the other side of the gate, some little distance beyond it, stood one of the sacred devil-trees. Its woe-begone appearance, like that of the pitiably expressive images in certain cathedrals, worn away by constant kissing, betrayed it at a glance to be the spoiled recipient of too much attention; for what with the shreds of cloth that hung, the most lamentable of rags, from its then leafless branches, and its mournfully isolated position, it looked wretched enough to be the victim of universal adoration. However, here the cause was more vicarious; for it was only a jail or trap, with the tattered finery for bait, and was supposed to be chock full of devils. Their startling proximity did not, however, terrify any one; for about the tree had been built a terrace of stone, that wayfarers might rest in summer beneath its friendly shade.

The country without the gate was, even for this part of Korea, particularly up and down, — a mass of peaks so huddled together that it was as much as Nature could do to provide the valleys necessary to their separate identity. Pushed a little farther, she would have given out in despair, to let them coalesce into one continuous table-land. There had evidently been some mistake as to the amount of surface to be prepared for this bit of country. Much more had been provided than there was space to cover, and being there had to be squeezed in, at the last moment, as best it could.

The first of these valleys that we entered has left upon my mind only an impression of much betrodden mud, — an impression which, if the reader can only grasp my expression of it, will accurately define the appearance in winter of many Korean spots other than this particular valley. It ended abruptly in another somewhat wider valley, which, however, instantly contracted on either hand from the point where we reached it. If the first valley had seemed cheerless, the second was nothing short of the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet. It fulfilled my idea of an impersonation of nothing. We travelled up this dreary species of cañon a few hundred yards, and suddenly came upon the spot we were seeking. Perched on one of the ledges that flanked the narrow stream, stood a tenantless temple. It was built in the Korean style of architecture in use since the inroad of Chinese taste, which the view I took of it will make more understandable than any description. It was indeed a little gem, well set off by its dreary isolation. It had been built, so I was afterwards informed, in commemoration of a certain battle, in which, as the Koreans aver, they conquered. The sides of the valley were almost treeless, with not enough earth upon them to hide the crags that stuck through in many places; and in the centre, on either side of the stream, were smooth gray ledges of rock, without even a vestige of covering, while innumerable boulders of all sizes strewed what at certain seasons evidently was the bed of a torrent. To the Korean eye, which sees in rocks the bones of mother earth, and in soil her flesh, the place must have seemed a very skeleton.

The little stream, with so much smooth rock immediately about it, had evidently been intended by Nature, so the Koreans wisely concluded, for a place in which to carry on a wholesale clothes-washing. In pursuance of this practical application of their appreciation of the locality, they had strewn the rocks

plentifully with their washed apparel, and left them there alone to dry; so that now innumerable white patches relieved, if they in no sense beautified, the otherwise universal gray. In spite of these evidences of humanity, there was not a creature to be seen from where we stood opposite the temple, with the single exception of a solitary individual in the distance, who had apparently been belated in the conclusion of his toil. For how many miles this sort of laundry exhibition continued I cannot directly affirm, for we only ascended the stream for a comparatively short distance; but there was no appearance of any decrease in the number of clothes so exposed as far as we could see ahead up the valley. In some places whole fields of them had been left quite far off by themselves to dry, in delightfully confiding abandonment; while in other spots we came upon groups of women industriously pounding less advanced specimens in a most merciless manner with short round sticks. This ocular proof of the custom alone convinced me that the Koreans ever washed their clothes. I had been more than sceptical before, but I realized then with contrition the wrong I had done a people who naturally find it impossible to keep clean in white garments.

The manner of their clothes-washing is, in all respects but one, the simplest imaginable. The clothes are taken to the nearest brook and thoroughly pounded with sticks until they have yielded up the ghost of the unclean spirit, when they are laid on the ground to dry. The simplicity of cut of the clothes makes this method as efficacious as it is easy. The one respect in which any sort of complication enters, is a practice which is also common to Japan, though there it is performed on all clothes alike, while in Korea only winter apparel is so treated. The garment to be washed is first ripped into its constituent parts, and each of these washed separately, and then separately set out to dry. The dismembered garment is subsequently

gathered up and sewed together again, so that in some sense a washing is equivalent to a new dress. In Japan the effect of this is even more peculiar, as the pieces are plastered down with the hand on boards to dry, in order thus the better to keep their shape, and the curious flat patchwork resembles anything rather than what it really is.

We continued up the valley — or rather made a short cut over a hill, where the valley made a bend — to a village famed for a certain paper-mill. It turned out that the mill had been discontinued, but we very nearly secured another object of interest by our sudden descent upon it. This just-missed prize was the most beautiful Korean woman I ever saw. She was very busily engaged in the local pursuit. Our seeing her but for a short time would alone account for the superlative, of course; but in this case it was a fact, for we did see her quite well though not long. The mistake lay in not being satisfied with a little. Unfortunately, we wished to photograph her. As soon as she caught sight of us, without so much as waiting to learn our intent, she fled with a precipitancy I have never seen equalled into a neighboring house, at the entrance to which stood an elderly man, who remained through it all as immovable as a statue. The house stood a little way up the bank on one side of the stream; we were on the other. To be robbed like this of what could not be duplicated, and so unnecessarily, too, seemed to us to be worthy a struggle to recover. So we began to parley. We summoned the good Kim to the front to address the aged impassive Korean on the bank, whom we assumed to have some connection with the fair refugee. There we all were, stationed like the posts of an army on the eve of an attack: the aged foe on the top of the bank; Kim interviewing him from the bottom of it; I directing operations from the middle of the brook; and the Japanese Secretary vouchsafing suggestions from a base of retreat on the further side. The assumed

connection, above mentioned, the aged Korean of course denied, which we told him mattered little to the affair, as the object of it was at least hiding in his abode, and he could therefore produce her. He said he could not; she was too obstinate and too alarmed. We then tried to explain to him, first the harmlessness of our purpose, and secondly the honor it was to be wanted for a photograph; and we enumerated a long list of illustrious victims to our art. This, we judged, could not be without an effect on him; but all he replied was that he did not know her well enough to speak to her Though unquestionably false, it would have been discourteous to have denied it; so we continued, diplomatically, to conciliate by suggesting all the other inducements which at the moment struck us as cogent, until finally he so far weakened as to offer us a substitute in the person of an old crone, as aged as himself, and more ugly, who appeared at that instant from within the house, and whom we took to be the grandmother of the beautiful girl, though she may have been older. Having lost all her looks, she at least had nothing to fear from the rape of a photograph Turning from the first individual, we directed our attention to the new-comer, and did our best to influence her presumably softer womanly heart by reviewing, in a different order,— for we had quite exhausted our stock of inventions,— all we had previously said to the man. She, however, would not so much as give us an answer, and did absolutely nothing at all, — for staring immovably could hardly be accounted doing anything, — and the man then gratuitously added to his other reasons of impossibility that the young woman had now run away home. We had not seen her depart, and we felt sure she was within; but we were powerless. The dog of the household had now added himself to the group on the bank, and took from time to time a lazy interest in the proceedings. Matters began to look hopeless; so we prepared for the inevitable, and waylaid a very

inferior specimen of the sex, who was on her way home with so heavy a bundle of washed clothes that she could not run away. But we never ceased regretting, to the end of our journey back and for many a long day after, that Korean prudishness should only have vouchsafed us the grandmother, when we had tried so hard for the maid.

It was entirely a question of sex that had stood in our way. In Korea there is, so far as I could judge from numerous instances, no superstitious fear of being photographed, such as exists in China, where with the image it is believed is taken away a part of the personality.

Though we also missed seeing the paper-mill, it may not be out of place here to say a word about that perhaps most famous of Korean manufactured products, Korean paper. In Korea, paper is not made from rags; it is made solely from the bark of the paper tree. The result is that Korean or Japanese or Chinese paper — for all three are made in the same way — is a very different article from paper such as we know it. Our paper tears easily in any direction; Korean paper tears only with the grain, and separates into long shreds when it comes apart at all. It is sometimes almost impossible to tear it; and I have known paper to split down its side, coming off in thin broad laminæ, rather than yield to a force across it. This strength renders it a much more generally serviceable article than ours would be. To write upon it is one of the very minor uses to which it is put; and in fact, in our sense of the word, it could hardly be written on at all, for it is never glazed. On the other hand, many kinds of it are oiled, and so become waterproof and exceedingly tough. Oil-paper is used for the inside fittings of a house, for hats, coats, and many other uses where it will be exposed to the weather or to continued wear and tear. The natural paper is used for writing (properly called painting), for books, fans, lanterns, and so on. So common is it in one form or the

other that it might almost be said that where the one kind is not used, the other is. Though it is not glazed, there is a sheen on it, due to the pressing to which it is subjected in the manufacture, and to the character of the material; but it is never smooth. Korean paper is even tougher than the Japanese, and is one of the few Korean things that had made a reputation in the world before its home had become truly a part of the community of nations.

CHAPTER XXX.

COSTUME.

IT is a curious and interesting fact that of all the manners and customs of a people, none should be considered more characteristic by the people themselves than dress. The very nomenclature of the subject betrays the feeling. Custom, costume, *habit*, *habitude*, show that what we have now differentiated into two sprang not long ago from a common root; and no better comment on the importance of a particular branch of any subject could be made than its appropriation in this manner of the generic name. This appropriation came about at a time, now some centuries since in our history, when the art of dressing commanded a care and attention never known before and in all probability never to be realized again. It may be said to have marked the culminating point of the world's indolence. That the art of dress may flourish, wealth is not so necessary a factor as opportunity. Perhaps this is why we find it, and all in connection with it, especially luxuriant in Korea. For we find it there in spite of the absence of those causes to which at first we might be inclined to ascribe it, and which in fact do keep it alive with us to-day. Where woman never appears in public, — where neither in her own person can she cultivate the art nor encourage its growth among what should be her admirers of the other sex, — the art of dress might well be expected to languish. Where society as we know the

term does not exist, who would take the pains to adorn himself with that enthusiasm which is born of vanity? When special times are set apart, particular occasional exertions can be made; but who can continuously remain at his highest pitch of endeavor? Who, in short, can attend to two things at once — his occupation and his appearance — with the zeal required to advance both?

But luxuriant as it is in Korea, it is a luxuriance tempered by despotism. Not that this in the least curtails its variety; it but allots and apportions the fruits. The sumptuary laws are as all-embracing on the one hand as they are minute on the other. What a Korean may — nay, what he must — wear, is prescribed not by unwritten usage, but by binding statute. It is only within certain narrow limits for a given man at a given time that change is possible. But in accordance with the rites he is forever changing his apparel. He must vary his clothes to suit his age, his station in life, his occupation of the moment. From the time that he is first wrapped in swaddling clothes till he is decently buried beneath a mound of earth, he is forever passing into some new phase of dress; and then, on top of this secular variation, recur endless periodic changes. The subject of mourning alone would occupy a short professional career to master. The whole matter is a very important item of the law of the land; it is one branch of the all-embracing rites. To attend to these questions of etiquette requires the abilities of a sixth part of the talent of the country; for of the six departments into which the Government is divided, one is the Ré Cho, or "board of rites," whose duty it is to prescribe, regulate, and govern this very thing. To the mind of a Korean its importance is equal to that of war or finance, and the amount of work connected with it is far greater. Why should it not be, to a people whose dislike to fighting is only exceeded by their distaste for business?

As it is so serious a matter, it is no surprise that fashions change only with dynasties. The fall of a ruling house is equivalent to the setting of a new mode; yet it is rather the occasion than the cause, and is the result of a somewhat distant chain of foreign circumstances. To understand it, we must turn our eyes for a moment to China.

Instead of an ever-victorious nation of conquerors, as one might, from the apparent permanence of their customs, suppose them, the Chinese have been, for many centuries, a people whose lot it was to be periodically a prey to invasions, — invasions as successful as successive. Once in about so often a wave of barbarian conquest, like a regularly recurring tide, has overrun and submerged the land. The waves obliterated in places the old landmarks, and left their own deposits in others, but on the whole swept over the solid monuments of the old civilization, to pass away without leaving widespread destruction to attest their visit. No sooner was the material conquest completed than the tables were turned, and the conquered became mentally the conquerors. Yet it was but a conversion in part; for to a certain extent the foreigners were too attached to some of their own practices to relinquish them. They generally clung to their dress, in part at least. Not unnaturally to the semi-civilized a change in costume seems, in some occult manner, associated with a loss of identity. In consequence they forced a portion of their garb upon the natives; and, strangest of all results, these latter came to be proud of what, in the first instance, had been imposed upon them as badges of servitude. Thus it is that to-day the glory of the Chinaman lies in the length of his plaited cue, originally the most humiliating of enforced appendages.

Preparatory, usually, to subduing China, the invading hordes were wont temporarily to swallow up Korea, and force her to the payment of an annual tribute, which, either directly or in

consequence of the internal dissensions it kindled, led to her change in costume.

The advent of the last fashion was about five hundred years ago, and was in result of the establishment of the Ming (or "Bright") dynasty. We may, if we please, see the glory of its light in the color of its garments; for they are a spotless white, tinged ever so slightly with a faint bluish tint, like the reflection from the sky which we catch in the color of the shadows of a clear day.

We now come to a most interesting episode in development, — the manner, namely, in which woman has influenced dress in Eastern Asia. Her absence has been as potent a force there as her presence has been elsewhere; for I think we must admit that to her indirectly is due the following singular feature of Asiatic thought.

The way in which the far-Oriental regards dress is somewhat peculiar. I can think of no simile so descriptive as the connection we tacitly assume between spirit and body. We hardly, in ordinary life, think of the one as devoid of the other, and we regard the latter as at least the sense-impression to us of the person within. So do they with dress. To their eyes it forms an essential part of their conception of the man. Somewhat in like manner we are ourselves impressed by dress, in the customary take-at-what-we-see estimate of our fellows. They differ from us in carrying the real into the ideal.

This is very strikingly seen in the matter of painting. Perhaps one of the most notable features about far-Eastern painting is its utter ignoring of the human figure. There is a complete void in that branch which among Europeans has always claimed much attention, — the study of the nude. To them artistically man is nothing but a bundle of habits in the sartorial sense. The practice is not due to an excess of what we call modesty. We may perhaps define modesty as the veiling

from public gaze of all of ourselves, in person or in mind, except so much as is sanctioned to exposure by conventionality. Substitute "necessity" for "conventionality," and you have the far-Eastern definition. Convenience, not convention, is the touchstone of propriety. They have not the smallest objection to being seen in a state of nature where occasion demands it; and, on the other hand, nothing would induce them to exhibit any portion of their persons for the purpose of display. To them to be clothed or naked is a matter of indifference; it is merely a question of temporary comfort. The reason why they disregard the body is other than this. It is simply that they have never been led to regard the body as beautiful. That this is so, is due to the low position of woman. She has never risen high enough in their estimation to attain even to that poor level of admiration, — that of being an object of beauty. All that should be her birthright they heap as a dowry upon Nature.

The study of drapery has benefited at the expense of what it encases, and plays a certain part even in the expression of the emotions.

Before proceeding to a detailed description of the series of garments in which the Korean wraps himself, there is one feature, common to all, which on the score of art merits our admiration, — the method of fastening. Buttons and button-holes have little or no part in the matter. Ribbons of a color to match the tunic to which they are attached, or such as to afford an agreeable combination, serve to confine it. Folding around the body, the right side innermost, each upper corner is secured by its pendent ribbon to a corresponding ribbon attached to the flap against which it lies. The inner, of course, is tied first, and then the other is fastened by a bow over the right breast. It is worth observing that on the other side of the world, too, where perhaps we are rather prone to expect contraries, men

fold their robes about them in the order of wrapping we ourselves observe.

Clothes proper — apart, that is, from head or foot gear — are few in variety and simple in form. It is not necessary to distinguish more than four kinds. These are a short jacket, loose baggy trousers, a long flowing tunic, and a sort of stole. The first two are worn next the skin, and take the place of our underclothing. As for the tunic, it may be one or many, dependent upon the state of the weather and the rank of the wearer. The higher the station of the man, the more tunics he wears. The discomfort thus ensuing upon importance is offset by thinness of material. The same principle, followed down the scale, leads to the two undergarments as its lowest terms. To a foreign eye these are as much outer garments as any of the others; and for aught he can see, the expression "more or less dressed" applies with strict literalness to a Korean.

The next point is the question of color. In this respect the Korean costume is distinctly beautiful. The bulk of the people dress, as I have said, in white, just perceptibly tinged with blue. It is perhaps unfortunate to have fixed upon so delicate a hue, as it would require more than humanity to preserve it. The faint blue of the Land of the Morning Calm soon fades, by contact with the dirt of the world, into the gray of common day.

The upper classes — that is, the officials — wear every other color under the heavens except this. Reds, greens, blues, and combinations of them, in the most daring and effective manner, adorn their persons. A brilliant scarlet will overlie an under tunic of as brilliant a blue, and harmonize in places into a fine purple. Often the sleeves and the body of the dress are in the most vivid contrast. The only rule seems to be that anything may go with anything else. The Koreans are particularly a people who are fond of color.

The costume of the soldiers is a dark blue for the greater part; in places it is crimson, with which ribbons effectively play their part. Over the breast is embroidered the character for valor. This inflammatory legend is doubtless to remind them, in times of trial, who and what manner of men they are. Otherwise they are a fine but quiet-looking lot, and absolutely need to be labelled dangerous to produce a proper military effect.

The cut of the tunic is conventional, not to say odd. It is assumed that the waist lies on a line with the armpits. This is questionable on the score of manly beauty; but when it comes to the case of woman, the effect is disastrous, and causes even the indifferent Japanese humorously to comment.

Female dress is made up of a very short jacket, loose baggy under-trousers, and over the trousers a petticoat, reminding one much of the Western article. Though this last is provided with an ample waistband, and is swathed as high upon the body as it will hold, without the faintest respect for anatomical structure, it sometimes fails to meet the rudimentary bodice by two or three inches, and a slit exposing the breasts is the result. I may add that such unfortunate exposure is not intentional, and is only to be seen among that class whose lot is to draw water at the wells.

In the case of the men, some distance above the place where the waist really is, half for the purpose of aiding to confine the flowing robe, half as an ornamental badge, runs a girdle, — a cord of some brilliant color, which ties in a loose knot in front and ends in two large tassels, hanging down two feet directly in front. Otherwise the dress is one continuous piece, with nothing to mar its lines of fall. The sleeves are exceedingly ample, two feet wide, and are sewed up all their length and for half of their breadth at the end. This converts them into the most excellent of pockets; for, however the arm be raised

or swung, some part of the sleeve always hangs below the level of spill. From the general assortment and bulk of what it can and does carry, it may be looked upon as a natural travelling-bag. Merchants in this way transport their wares, scholars their books and writing materials, and officials their fans. Tobacco alone is not so carried. That is too much an article of momentary need to permit of the spending the time necessary to hunt for it among other objects. It must be borne where it can at once be unmistakably grasped; so it has dedicated to its own particular use a pouch hung at the waist. This pouch is worn from the most infantile years, that the husk may be ready for the kernel of more adult age; for children do not, as one might otherwise suspect, smoke from the moment they step out of the cradle. Nevertheless, precautions are taken that the path may be smoothed and prepared for them in advance. Among adults of both sexes smoking is universal. A man or woman who does not smoke finds it necessary to apologize to society.

Instead of meeting at an acute angle, the two folds of the tunic are cut out around the neck so as to join in the form of an oval. Fitted on to the silk, on the inner side, is a white band of cotton. It represents the European collar; and it is interesting to observe here, too, an expression of the same need that is felt among us of isolating within a white border the picture to be displayed.

This border of cotton — a foil to the face, on the one hand, and to the silk, on the other — leads me to say a word about the materials of dress.

In the very earliest ages, so that not only the memory of man but his legends before him run not to the contrary, there existed already, in a state of domestication, the silkworm. In the character for "east" — one of the oldest of the Chinese ideographs, and therefore one in which we can distinctly trace the old

simple drafting of Nature — the sun is seen rising through the branches of a tree. This tree is said to represent the mulberry. With this same idea is associated the old legendary name for Japan, — the name by which, first mythologically and then, the myth gradually clothing itself with reality, as a material fact, the islands became known to the inhabitants of the neighboring continent. Whether it was there that the mulberry was discovered, or whether it was simply found there in great numbers and goodly specimens, by wanderers from the mainland, matters not. They called the country Pusang, and they wrote its characters to signify "the mulberry tree;" and the tree proved so great a blessing that they deified it, and it became to them "the tree of the gods."

In truth, by far the most beneficent of Nature's gifts to the people of the far-East is, and has ever been, this one of silk. We insensibly do homage, too; for we have adopted with the article its time-honored name, and our word "silk" is the nearest approach in pronunciation that our predecessors were capable of making toward the Chinese sound.

Silk constituted the dress of the higher classes, while a species of hemp, known as grasscloth, furnished out the common people. One recommendation for this latter must certainly always have been its most serviceable mud-color.

About the second century of our era the Chinese Empire received the present of a new material. It was probably at the hands of our own, though somewhat remote, ancestors that they first became acquainted with cotton. They would seem to have been much taken with it. An emperor was so much delighted as to have a dress made of it, in which he appeared on state occasions. They showed their fancy no less strongly by trying to keep the thing entirely to themselves, even refusing to give their neighbor, Korea, any of the seeds. In this manner they did contrive to prevent its introduction into the peninsula.

Attempts to get it proved vain. At last, one of the yearly ambassadors, during his stay of three days at Pekin, managed to possess himself of a few seeds. Some of these he hid in the hollow stem of his paint-brush; and then in order to render assurance doubly sure, he inserted some more under the skin of his left leg. He succeeded in escaping detection, and in this peculiar manner cotton came into Korea. It was found to be a most happy mean between silk and grasscloth, and soon became the material for the dress of the great bulk of the people.

Woollen is quite unknown, for there are no sheep anywhere on the peninsula; but on the score of warmth, wadded cotton, although perhaps a little bulky, serves equally well.

It is not without interest in this connection to notice the absence of satin. In spite of the various forms of silk, — raw silk, finished silk, watered silk, — all much used, silk never appears as satin; and thereby Korea loses much of possible magnificence.

I have spoken of grasscloth; and I mention it again, not on account of any intrinsic beauty, but for the very appropriate use to which it is now put. It is the material of mourning. Singularly in keeping with its cause, as the material is, it is somewhat surprising that travellers in China, where the custom is the same, should have been so little impressed with the harmony of the two as to spread abroad tales that have now grown into a prevalent misconception. One of the first facts we are given to learn about the Celestial Empire is that white, instead of black, is its badge of woe; and we are naturally at a loss to understand the inversion of a custom which, above other customs, seems to bear the impress of Nature's sanction; for, beyond man's power to sever the tie, white is associated with joy, black with sorrow. Now, the answer to the paradox is quite simple, — no such inversion exists. To call the color

of a mourner's dress white is a misuse of words equivalent to a substitution of all color for no color in particular. In Korea especially does this definition become an impossible means to identify the class. Misled by what I had been told, and by the same description repeated to me by Koreans themselves, for the first few days I hunted industriously but in vain for mourners. Everybody was dressed in white, and identification of individuals from any such definition was simply preposterous. As I afterwards discovered, those I sought were clad in what was the least so of all, — what could, in fact, only be called so by courtesy. The truth is, the stuff is of its own natural unbleached color, the neutral color of dried grass. It is exactly what I imagine the sackcloth of Scripture to have been like. It is coarse, poor, sad.

Texture and tint alike forbid the joys, the beauties, of this world an entrance. For a time, and by law a very long time, the man has nought in common with life; for life means to him beauty. If lacking apparently in ease of detection at a distance, any danger of being inappropriately accosted is avoided by the fashion of the costume, which quite secludes the wearer from the rest of mankind. In addition to a hat, many square feet in area, which, curving downward on all sides, effectually conceals the person within it, he carries before his face a respirator made of the same sombre material as the dress, — this last is a piece of cloth stretched between two sticks, which, being longer than the cloth is wide, serve also as handles, — so that as he wanders through the crowded street, he remains as utterly alone as if no other lived. He is even more solitary, for he has not the world of Nature to distract him from the introspection of his own gloom. Thus, for the space of three long years, he hardly knows what it is to live.

These screens, — or respirators, as they look to be, and to which purpose in cold winter days they are admirably adapted,

if indeed unintentionally put — are as much of an integral part of the dress as any other portion of it. They are not peculiar to mourners, — only the material of which theirs are made is distinctive; they are as much a perquisite of the official class. As the chair of a magistrate is hurried past, borne by four men arranged tandemwise in front and behind, the sole occupation of the grandee, who sits craning over as if either very uncomfortable or exceedingly shy, seems to consist in holding one of these before the lower part of his face. The labor of holding it up must be a dear price to pay for the luxury of dignified seclusion. When not in immediate use, both sticks are held between the thumb and forefinger. Even in so insignificant a matter as this action there is a right and a wrong way of doing things, which, as the following tale shows, may occasionally become important. The story is told of a man of the lower orders who tried by donning fine clothes to pass himself off for one of his betters. He was a blacksmith, and he was bound on a journey into the country. He passed current for what he assumed to be, — not so difficult a matter in this world elsewhere as in Korea, it would appear, — till the course of his travels brought him to a river. Now, in Korea the means of crossing a stream is the ferry. Only in the cities do such things as bridges span the current. On stepping into the boat he took down his screen and held it in his hand. The ferryman at once detected him through his fine clothes and assumed manner, — not by the look of his face, but by the way he held his screen. He was a blacksmith, and accustomed to handle the huge chopsticks with which he pursued his daily avocation in chopstick fashion. His fingers remembered their cunning while his untutored mind was ignorant of etiquette, and so he was caught holding the screen unsuspectingly in the manner habit had rendered a second nature.

Foot-gear in Korea is represented by a low shoe, a thing with the form of a slipper and the solidity of a boot, and a thick

wadded sock. The shoe is made of leather, and is so exceedingly tough as to suggest an unfortunate lack of softening processes in the preparation of the material. It is quite open, with the exception of the toe, where a little top leather and an upward roll suggest the turtle bow of a boat. This curvature at the toes, combined with the want of flexibility of the stuff, renders the wearing of the shoe with our stockings exceedingly distressing at first; and even after the most thorough breaking-in it never becomes really comfortable. Here the wadded sock comes well into play. It acts as a buffer to the foot, both against the cold and the shoe; and the combination, — a white sock and an excessively open shoe, — though suggestive, in appearance, of summer, is much to be preferred in bitter weather to our own. Especially is this true in the motionless, cramped positions one's feet assume as a matter of necessity in the palanquin, where two feet and a half cube is one's allotted space.



A KOREAN SOCK.

The shoe is of Chinese origin, and appears to be, as in fact it is, an earlier and less finished edition of what is now worn in the Middle Kingdom. Less ornamented, it is also less solidly made, in spite of its unyielding rigidity. Its color is black, varied now and again for officials by some passing fancy of temporary fashion. Blue was in the sunshine of favor a little while ago.

A KOREAN SHOE.



The sole is made of one piece, and on one straight line; its thickness is about a quarter of an inch, and is uniform throughout its length. It has therefore no heel. On the other hand, the modern Chinese shoe might be said to be all heel, so thick is the multiple sole.

In another particular the soles differ from the present Chinese fashion. The Korean are shod with nails, while the Chinese are perfectly smooth. This uncouth workmanship is held up to admiration by a certain tale touching its origin. The story is of one of the many Chinese invasions of the peninsula, and the time winter. The invading army numbered eight hundred thousand; so at least it seemed to the terror-stricken eyes of the five thousand Koreans gathered to oppose their passage of the Pyöng An River. Nevertheless, both armies advanced upon the ice, — the Chinese to effect the crossing, the Koreans to await their coming near the farther bank and repel them if possible. The Chinese were shod, as usual, smooth; but the natives wore, as they were accustomed to do for ice travel, a peculiar species of spiked shoe, with which they were enabled to run about as though the ice were dry land. The poor strangers slipped, staggered, and fell, — an easy prey to the Koreans, who slaughtered them by thousands. In consequence of this victory, the lucky shoe became an object almost of adoration. It was decreed that thenceforward all shoes should be made after this pattern, and from that time to the present day the national shoe is nailed. As they are only worn out of doors, the roughness of the sole is quite compatible with the finish and neatness of the floors within.

Quite in keeping with the fundamental Korean principle, that the more on the better dressed, the court boot is such as to suggest complete protection against the most severe weather underfoot, instead of the reception hall of a king; and yet, seen

in the general costume, it is effective by hiding the gap of white between the tunic and the shoe in the ordinary dress.



A KOREAN BOOT.

Then there is the sandal of the laboring class, which is the exact opposite of the shoe, — open where that is shut, and shut where that is open. It constitutes a sort of just satire upon the latter; for the class who use it wear it for its serviceableness, not its looks.

Korean clothing is admirably adapted to the purposes demanded of it. It is loose and thick for winter, loose and thin for summer wear. When we consider that the climate, as regards heat and cold, is very much like our own, with rather more accentuation, we perceive a part of the reason why the dress must be peculiarly warm at one season and peculiarly airy at another. The other half of the same need of warmth lies in the genius of the people. Hurry finds no place in Eastern thought. The only thing worthy devotion is study; and that requires contemplation, not bustle. A dignified demeanor is their ideal of action. Exercise — the passionate pursuit of a section of the Western world and the bugbear of a necessity to another portion — is utterly unknown to them. Walking or riding is only undertaken because for some immediate object it becomes necessary. In olden times archery was in vogue among the nobles because in still older times it was made use of in war; but nowadays even this has died out. Their object, therefore, in apparel, apart from display, is to be comfortable in repose; and this, after personal experience of the comparative comfort possible under their system and our own, I can affirm to be realized.

I must close this slight sketch with a few words on fans. The reader is doubtless aware — though probably not with that subtilty of discrimination, bred of use, which distinguishes a far-Oriental — that there is more than one species of fan. The want of a highly specialized vocabulary is the misfortune consequent upon being born in a comparatively fanless land. Now, in the far-East it is very different. In common every-day fans there are two all-embracing varieties, — namely, those that fold up and those that do not; like the "a" and the "not a" of logic, — a universal and fundamental division in the far-East. Those that do not fold up are styled, in Korean, "tailed fans," from the stick or caudal appendage by which they are held. The others are called simply "folding fans." Each class has its own particular name in both Japanese and Korean; and if you make a mistake from ignorance and ask for the one, you will assuredly not get the other. Besides these classes, they distinguish those for men, women, and children. The folding fans outrank the tailed on account of the greater ease with which they can be disposed of when not in use. They then simply disappear up the sleeve. The gift of a fan is one of the commonest of the little presents which far-Orientals are constantly making to one another.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ON HATS.

IN speaking of costume, it will be noticed that I have said nothing about hats. Such omission is not due to the fact that there are none. Quite the reverse. Nor is it because what there are, are in any wise insignificant. On the contrary, their number is only exceeded by their importance. The fact is, the subject demands more than a chapter to itself; and even so, justice can hardly be done to the marvels of the thing. Nor would it have been becoming its dignity to have scattered a description of it piecemeal here and there, as can with effect be done with matters of less vital interest. Unfortunately, no such gentle meandering of the stream of thought is here possible; for such is its importance to Koreans themselves on the one hand, and such its scientific value to the world at large on the other, that a treatise at least seems to be imperative. This, unhappily, must be deferred. But having become forcibly impressed, after a study of the article itself, with how little is known to us about hats, and how interesting even a few facts in the matter must necessarily prove to the fairer half of mankind, I have at last succeeded in condensing, with much anguish to my own feelings on the subject, what should have occupied volumes into this short essay; and little it is, as tribute to a land which would need no other distinction than that of being known as the land of hats.

The celebrated Professor Teufelsdruck of Weissnichtwo would seem to have been the first philosopher to appreciate the great scientific interest inherent in dress. In his masterly treatise on clothes, he first directed the attention of scientists to this neglected outskirt of their domain. But in spite of his labors, they have not yet worn the subject threadbare, however shabbily they may have treated such unfortunate individual specimens as have fallen to their own personal use. The hat especially would seem to have been neglected. So capital an omission can only be explained by a reference to the ill-disguised but wholly undeserved contempt in which the article is generally held, and the consequent customary disrespect shown it in ordinary wear. Only in the estimation of woman is it deemed worthy of prolonged reflection and affectionate regard. By man — to whom indeed, from the shortness of his hair, it is a much more necessary appendage — it is only affected in public outdoor use, and is regarded as indispensable, and valued accordingly, in proportion to the badness of the weather. It is never admitted into the intimacy of private life. On entering the house it is at once banished, as offensive to the eye, to some dark closet.

The art usually precedes the science; and perhaps the continued gray skies of the north of Europe have had their effect. Or, perhaps, Nature attained the limit of her creative ability in the tall cylinder of fashion, and her powers could extend no farther. In her next attempt the stately edifice suddenly collapsed, as we see in our crush hats of to-night. Disheartened, she has tried no more.

It is quite different on the other side of the globe. There the hat receives its due. Especially in Korea, the land of hats, is the hat honored. Indeed, it is there that one first realizes the infinite possibilities of the genus hat. It descends on one like a revelation. Articles of such aged familiarity with us as to

have acquired an undisputed prescriptive right to their own identity, turn out there, in the most unexpected manner, to be merely different varieties of hats. Who, forsooth, left to his own unaided speculations, would imagine that a huge green alpaca "family" umbrella, to which one instinctively pays the passing tribute of a shudder, is own cousin to one of those airy nothings, mere touches of beauty, known by a delicate fiction as bonnets? — in our scientific zeal, we had almost said identical with it? For Korea was reserved the honor of furnishing the evidence of the connection, and thus of adding another and a most conclusive proof to the great theory of development; for it is nothing less than adaptability to its environment that has caused the umbrella to grow a stick and the bonnet to lose its strings, — the last feeble vestige of the same organ. Rough weather has imbued the one with a striving after independence; its favored situation has been an allurement to the other to nestle its separate existence away.

The air of the Morning Calm is not favorable to the differentiation of species. The yearly natural selection of Paris or London or New York operates not. In consequence the genus "kasi," or hat, has been prevented from separating into widely divergent forms. The hat has remained, almost without exception, a domestic article. None of its species have become wild. With us, now, the species umbrella has become to a certain extent emancipated. It has acquired an existence of its own, — as is witnessed, incidentally, by the ease with which it changes owners. It still owes man an allegiance, to be sure, but it is no longer directly associated with his person. In Korea it is. It is worn there on the top of the head, like any other hat. This possesses great advantages. It renders life in so far the more secure and peaceful. It is a thrice happy land, indeed, where a man does not make love to his friend's umbrella. He is prevented, because the article in question, when not upon its

owner's head, is safely tucked away in his pocket. Of course, the practice labors under the social inconvenience of not being enough for two; but this is of the less consequence in a land where walks are always single in intent, and the umbrella is never called upon for a *double entente* in service. Man has there no *tête-a-têtes* by inclination, which is fortunate, as even the fair-weather hats in vogue only permit a most distant approach of the two heads, quite incompatible with any satisfactory understanding.

Still it is a great convenience to be able to pocket one's umbrella. It is a polygonal cone of oiled-paper, of a deep yellow color, and is tied over the hat, the strings fastening under the chin. It folds up into a praiseworthy small compass, and disappears mysteriously up the wearer's sleeve when the weather clears.

The genus "kasi," being prevented from separating itself into distinct species, has developed all the greater number of varieties. When our museums shall have realized the importance of a systematized collection of hats, Korea will become the collector's paradise; for the number of different kinds to be found there is simply enormous. Nor are the variations by any means empirical. Each hat is adapted to a special purpose. There are hats for fair weather, hats for foul, indoor hats, outdoor hats, every-day hats, court hats, immense hats, almost no hat; in short, every condition of the heavens above, or of man's brain beneath, finds its appropriate expression in some particular hat.

A study was once made in Europe of the character of the passers-by, from the appearance of the lower six inches of their persons, as these were seen upon the sidewalk from a basement window. Take the top six in Korea, and you have an equally good criterion for the determination of your man.

The common outdoor hat — the *kasi popularis Koreansis* — is a truly fine invention, worthy of ranking, for meaningless

absurdity of form, with our own tall hat of fashion. It has a small circular truncated conical crown, some five inches in diameter at the base, tapering to four at the top, and about as many inches high, and a broad circular brim, eighteen inches across; that is, it looks like a patent fly-trap. It is made of very fine split bamboo and silk in the finer specimens. The bamboo forms the skeleton upon which is woven the silk. But so delicate is the work that for the unpractised eye it is almost impossible to detect which is which of the two materials. In the cheaper specimens the whole is woven of horse-hair. The geometrical patterns thus introduced, in the weaving, from the shape, as well as others woven there from mere wantonness of ornament, are most beautiful. Unfortunately, these could not be brought out in the cut. The hat is kept in place by broad black ribbons tied under the chin, and is itself of a uniform glossy black.



THE ORDINARY EVERY-DAY HAT.

In prehistoric times the thing may have been susceptible of removal; but now, long since, it has grown to its present position, and no Korean can in decency appear without it, except only to make room for some other hat. A man would part with any or all his clothing sooner than take off his hat. On entering a house, he leaves his shoes outside to await his return, but he and his hat go in together. As he sits down to eat, he divests himself of his outer garments that he may eat with the greater freedom, but his hat stays on; and so it sticks to him through life, — a permanent black halo.

Next in importance to the hat proper — for it is emphatically such in both senses — is the black scull-cap, after the fashion of the nightcap of our ancestors. It may be described as a species of hat underclothing. All classes above the very lowest wear it all the time under the above-mentioned *kasi popularis*. It again is of silk or horse-hair, according to its quality, and is not so stiff as its outer envelope. Its form is pyramidal, after the style once so fashionable for jelly moulds. It rises terrace-like backwards, and baffles description. Like its predecessor, it has lost all power of changing its habitat. It cleaves closer even than the last, and remains a faithful attendant to the head in its journey into the land of dreams.



THE SCULL-CAP, WITH THE MITRE-HAT OVER IT.

Constant it ought to be; for it is the most essential of attributes. To it a person owes his position in society. A man is much more firmly bound to his hat than he is attached to his wife. He may put away the latter; without the former, life becomes a hollow mockery, for the hat makes the man. Without it he remains forever a boy. For this reason is the ceremony of investiture becomingly solemn.

Man is born a tailed animal. In one long braid his jet-black tresses caress his back. He takes his cue from antiquity, and he ties the tip up with black ribbon, as fits a present from the deceased. Like unto a lass at first, his appearance deceives even those who have lived for years in neighboring Japan into the belief that he is a girl. At this stage of his Korea he is innocent of the delights, the honors, of the hat. His modesty and his thick coarse hair are his only head-covering.

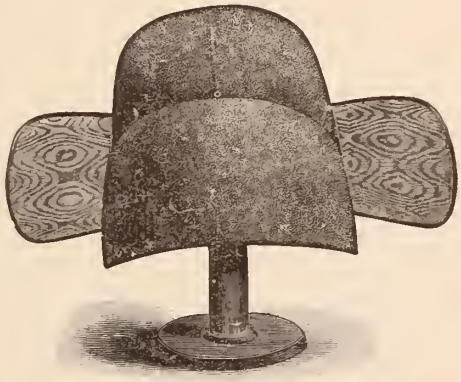
Perhaps it is only the debased Western taste which worships the soul through the medium of the tresses. At any rate, the Korean boy does not adore his own. At the first possible opportunity he cuts them off; and they disappear, — some, we are informed, to Europe, to appear again in society there under somebody else's name. But in spite of the fashionable art being a matter of course, the article itself was so coarse a matter that, exported to supply the ravages of time among the belles of Paris, it was found not to blend sufficiently with the native growth to deceive even the least experienced of admirers. What remains to the original Korean possessor he twists lovingly round a stick of coral or amber, that it may stand upright, and encases it safe, even from soap and water, within its nest of hats.

This change in hair-dressing is the most important event in any Korean's life. It may take place at seven years of age, and commonly does take place before he has reached fourteen. By it he becomes a man, as we should say, legally and socially, or, more truly to conform to Eastern ideas, patriarchally. It is similar to the donning of the *toga virilis* in Rome. There exists one slight difference in that it is accompanied by a necessary though otherwise unimportant conditionary act, — namely, marriage. Matrimony has a sort of reciprocity in common in Söul and Paris. It is a stepping-stone to station in both, — to man in the one, to woman in the other. What to a girl in the gay capital is the latch-key to pleasure, to the boy in Korea is the gateway to life. We need hardly remark that the consequences to the other halves in the contract, in both countries, are not so important.

Then, again, the various stages in the consummation of the affair are marked by different hats. The preparatory stage, the betrothal, is characterized by the wearing of a hat of yellow straw, but otherwise after the fashion of the ordinary

one; the accomplishment of the deed, by the full-fledged black silk.

He has now won his halo; but if his blood be blue and his poems numerous, he may develop wings and soar into the presence of his sovereign. When you have become quite used to the ordinary hat, so that it ceases to be in any way a diverting object and you have come to look upon it with the indifferent glance you bestow upon any well-known detail of a familiar landscape, the court hat will still be found capable of rousing your dormant attention. It is made of the same material as the others, but differs in shape. A high oval crown, with a step in it half-way up, fits tightly over the forehead, and on either side of it are attached wings. These are said by some to be an apotheosis of the human ear, and to typify the alacrity with which the royal commands are received; for everywhere to obey is first to hear. The appendages are shaped like paddles with the concave side in front. They impart, as they are meant to do, a certain seraphic appearance to the court; and it is the ambition of the whole nation to become this species of ministering angel to its sovereign. The grades in rank are marked, among other ways, by a difference in wings. The higher the position the thicker the wings, — the stuff being fashioned two-ply instead of single. Even his Majesty is bonneted after the same fashion, only that his wings stand erect instead of projecting at the sides; his suzerain, the Emperor of China, being too far off to be supposed within ear-shot.



A COURT HAT.

So much for some of the out-door hats belonging to one person, — hats, that is, which can be worn out of doors; for all out-door hats are also in-door hats, but all in-door hats are not necessarily out-door ones. For instance, there is the beautiful mitre hat. This is only worn in the strictest *déshabillé*. One's intimates alone have an opportunity to view it. To be seen wearing it upon the street would be highly improper. In shape it is canonical, the apotheosis of the pontifical tiara. Anatomically speaking, it is structurally the same, — a framework of black silk, but nothing more; cloven, turreted, pinnacled, yet without body and without weight; something like



A MITRE HAT, THE CUE SEEN UNDERNEATH.



THE "CHEF-DE-CUISINE" HAT, NOT, HOWEVER, A CULINARY BADGE.

what we might suppose the other would become if ever the Church abandons its dogma of material supremacy and confines itself solely to the kingdom of heaven. There is a certain fitness in the form of this hat. In a land where the worship of ancestors is the only religion, every man is perforce his own high-priest, and may therefore with propriety wear the priestly insignia.

Then there is the *chef-de-cuisine* hat. This is not affected by cooks, but is worn by almost any other class indiscriminately, from soldiers to shopmen. It is sometimes black,

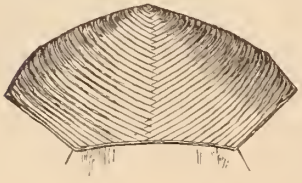
sometimes white. Thus far we have been describing small hats, — those, that is, whose size did not require to be estimated in square feet. As for the large hats, they are represented by two imposing varieties, — the bull-driver's and the mourner's hats; the *kasi gigantea incognita*, divided into *boviensis* and *lacrimans*. They both serve the purpose of entirely concealing the wearer from his fellow-men. In the case of the bull-driver it is probably, judging from personal experience, that he may jostle aside foot-passengers and then plead the excuse of not seeing them. With the mourner it is to help him withdraw from an unsympathetic world, while still pursuing his ordinary avocations. These two huge perambulant mushrooms are at first mistaken for each other; and the reverently disposed courteously makes way for what he takes to be a mourner, to find that he has been imposed upon by a bull-herd. Nowhere is an intimate acquaintance with geometry more necessary for the keeping of one's self-respect; for it is all a question between the hexagonal and the square. Both hats are made of plaited straw, and both are in the form of inverted colossal soup-plates. The easiest discrimination at first is to look for the bull. But this is unscientific, and if the bull-driver happens temporarily to have parted with his animal, misleading. The important difference lies in the plaiting. One is so woven as to end in a square at the bottom, — this is the bull-driver's; while the other, the mourner's, has a six-sided rim. The mourner's is of finer work and a heavier hat, — more distressing to carry round. The plaiting is so managed as to run into itself at the top without a break, — endlessly, if we may so express it, — after the analogy of a chain. One cannot but study and admire, as he overtakes the moving mass of sackcloth in its walk, the two apparent incompatibilities harmonized, — the square at the bottom, the round at the top, — corners that develop out

of nothing, angles that vanish into elemental flatness. Meanwhile the hat is slowly proceeding, with presumably a man under it.

The superficial area of each of these hats is about six square feet.[1] To travel through life forever in one's own shadow, — it cannot be broadening in its effect on anything but the hat. The mourners have the best of it; their term is only for three years.

The soldier's hat is almost the only species we find breaking out into color. Even the rank and file wear a band of red tape — a most pleasingly delicate suggestion of discipline — to relieve the sombre hue of the black felt; while among the headcoverings of the officers decoration runs riot. Plumes of the gaudiest colors and brilliant ribbons vie with one another in spreading over the ample brim. Where the useful is not demanded of Nature, she can devote all her energies to ornament. The army is for home duty entirely, in the strictest sense of the term. It is for the purpose of swelling the king's retinue on procession days, and of being detailed in squads to perform the same function at promenades of the magistrates. In old times it minded strictly its own business, and let foreign armies alone as much as possible. It looks now as if evil communications from without were gradually corrupting its inherited innocency.

It may not be wholly out of place here to mention a bit of discovery relating to this hat. One day, in the course of our wanderings through the city of Söul, we stumbled across a military-hat shop. As it was the most remarkable shop we



[1] To show that this is no exaggeration, I may say that the hat is of the general form of a flattened hemisphere, with a diameter of between two feet and two feet and a half. Using the formula $2\pi r$ for the superficial area, and then deducting something for difference of shape, we get about six square feet.

ever saw, we may perhaps be pardoned the digression. It was built like all ordinary houses, about seven feet high in front, rising to ten at the back, with a tile-roof that swooped down from the ridge-pole towards the street. It had nothing at all pretentious about it. With the exception of a very narrow door, it showed a solid wall of masonry to the passer-by. Nature had evidently intended it for respectable privacy rather than for gaudy display. But where there is the will in Korea to have a shop, there is always the way in front to utilize for the purpose. On a stand before the house, some distance off by itself in the street, were ranged rows of black felt hats, and on the adjacent earth were reposing more. But this was nothing, — only the commonest of tricks. It was on glancing upward that the full ingenuity of the shopkeeper came into view. The roof was of such a height and slant that from a little way off its upper surface was seen to great advantage. Like the better class of roofs, it was composed of scroll-tiles in parallel rows, — an arrangement which left intermediate lines of valley. Korean genius saw its opportunity. The happy thought had occurred to the proprietor to use these valleys as show-cases for the exhibition of more hats; and so there they lay in rows on the roof, in true military file, challenging customers.

These are a few specimens of the male hats. Female hats are not well represented. There are only two aureoles which fashion has deigned graciously to accord to the fair sex, who, in Korea, are shut out from the kingdom of this world, — only two, that is, that in the present incomplete state of the collection have rewarded our research. Of these but one is extant; the other, unfortunately, extinct. The latter is interesting from its family connection. It is the great-aunt, if not the actual ancestress, of the fringed parasol. Perhaps, without our being quite conscious of it, a certain piquancy in the coquetry of this article of feminine apparel may come to it from the precisely

contrary intention which designed its progenitress. That fringe, which now the more ravishingly reveals by partially concealing, was at first invented, not that admirers sufficiently zealous might look in, but that the object herself might in emergencies look out. Perched securely on top of the black tresses gathered into a knot behind, rested the hat. From its ample brim hung down a deep fringe two feet long, from within whose charmed circle alone beauty held a distant converse with the world. Every now and then, the better to see some desired object, we may fancy a pretty hand — for we are bound to be gallant to the past — would part the concealing tassels, which, the hasty, startled glance over, would fall back, as if conscious of their duty, into their former place.

This was of the fashion before the last, and passed away, in due course of revolution, some five centuries ago. Fashions change rather more slowly in the far-East than in the capital of European millinery. Instead of the Empress of the French, the court at Pekin sets the fashion; and a new mode once a dynasty is considered ample to meet the demands of the most fickle of tastes. A change of dynasty happens, on an average, once in every two hundred years, and in consequence of an overthrow of the ruling race by a new foreign one. From Pekin each new style found its way into comparatively provincial Korea. But at last the conservative Koreans, who had no such excuse as a change of nationality in the ruling house for an alteration in their clothes, grew tired of changing their dress just as they had got accustomed to it, and for five centuries have preferred to stick to one style of hats, even at the expense of being considered a trifle old-fashioned. The change in policy was rather unfortunate for the poor women; for it so happened that just at that moment they were left, by accident or by the caprice of fate, hatless, and what would have been but a temporary discomfort, even supposing that it was recognized as a

discomfort at all, — such is the callousness to actual inconvenience which fashion is able to engender, — has been prolonged into an inherited loss. They have been obliged, in place of hats, to call into requisition old green gowns; self-evidently a makeshift, for they still possess sleeves which now have no employment, and dangle helplessly at the side, as the gowns, used for mufflers, are thrown over everything, — head and all, — and are held together from the inside by the hand.

The other kind above-mentioned — the extant species — is quite pretty. All women may wear it, but very few do. Practically it is purely professional, and is therefore to be met with in very small numbers. It is an attractive little thing, both on its own account and from the nature of those who wear it. It is an exact counterpart of a vivandiere's cap, and is worn by all geisha, — those stars of Korean as of Japanese society. If all is *fair* in love and war, — only that we prefer to read the adjective as meaning "beautiful," — why should not like caps be the distinctive mark of the ministering angels in both cases? As there are but twenty of these damsels in all Söul, specimens of the hat are rare.

Such are a few of the types of the genus "kasi." There are many others whose discussion would prove highly interesting in an extended treatise on the subject; but time prevents our attempting as yet so valuable a work. We see rising before us whole vistas of hats waiting impatiently to be catalogued; and reluctantly, most reluctantly, we turn away. But for the present it must suffice to have indicated the salient points of the subject. One deduction, in passing, we may draw from it. The opening of the hermit-land has not been wholly without result to the ever-grasping hand of science; for has it not thrown some light upon the solution of the important sumptuary problem, so oft propounded in vain, "Is it a bonnet or a hat?"

We conclude this with a brief notice of another quite unlooked-for bit of proof, — and very valuable, were such indeed still at all necessary to the establishing of our theory, — the evolution of a new species of hat, a hybrid, which suddenly made its appearance in the capital. It was due to an unexpected interfertilization of representatives of the Eastern and Western branches of the family, thereby yielding still further evidence of a community of origin. Its form it derived from the foreign sojourner, its material from the native stock. We should hardly have deemed our old felt hat — a *chapeau d'occasion*, as we must confess it had fully become — worthy of the honor, still less should we have imagined the possibility of any such affiliation; but this is what happened. We were one day asked by one of our Korean friends — in that suspiciously artless manner which suggests, by its too evident assumption of indifference, the something coming — for the loan of our hat for a day or two. Of course we acceded, and of course we discreetly suspected nothing, albeit the *dénouement* of a similarly pious fraud from the legation a few months before, which had been related to us, in some wise prepared us for the result. The matter was rendered all the more ominous from the approach of the Korean New Year, — a season of universal rejoicing and present-making. Several days passed by, and to all appearance we had quite forgotten our poor old servitor, — so heartless in remembrance is weak humanity to its nearest and dearest, — when, in course of time, it got to be New Year's eve, and we were sitting in our study, awaiting the cook's preparations for dinner,



THE HYBRID.

when suddenly we heard a noise as of much tramping and many voices outside. The next moment the sliding panels were pushed aside, and there entered a procession accompanying the bearers of two huge oil-paper mountains, — hat-cases, as they turned out to be, — which the bearers then reverently deposited upon the table. The procession then explained, with becoming formality and importance, that the huge oil-paper bandboxes were New Year's gifts from his Majesty. At the same time our own hat was handed back to us with a ceremony suggestive of the termination of a successful juggler's trick. On opening the cases, amid the breathless expectancy of the attendant multitude, each box was found to contain what looked like the apotheosis of our borrowed hat. It preserved its form with scrupulous exactness, and seemed to be its spirit; for it was singularly destitute of body. It was made of finely woven black silk, so immaterial in essence that when put on, the most casual observer could easily detect through its meshes the head inside. In material it perfectly resembled the Korean silk hat, from which same stuff, indeed, it had been woven. It thus itself furnished unmistakable evidence of its parentage. As is always the case with new-born children, the followers of each party at once saw in it a striking likeness to the hat belonging to the other side of its family pedigree.

So much for what can be gleaned about the origin of the hat from what it still is; let us now glance at some further evidence coming from what it is called. To do this we shall go back from Korea to Japan.

CHAPTER XXXII.

AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY CORNER IN LANGUAGE.

AS is well-known, the umbrella is not indigenous to Europe. It was imported thither from the East within historic times, and it has come down to us from a past when its use was very different from what it is to-day. In travelling westward, it journeyed also northward, and in doing so, got into more and more inclement climates, until the idea of it came to be associated with bad weather. But originally it was not so. In fact, its present name — a name which has survived a purpose — points to the sunshine, not the rain. "The little shade" suggests by antithesis, in all its oppressive languor, a wide and weary world of glare and heat.

In Japan, too, we find a kindred name, though a twofold use. There, pointing to a like origin, it is called "higasa," or "sun-hat;" but it defends in turn from either the sunbeam or the shower. Though it did not come to us from Japan, still something may be learned of its origin there; and it is interesting to observe that while the first half of its compound name gives us information as to what it was for, the second tells us something of what it was. There it is still recognized as belonging to the hat tribe. The evidence of name in Japan bears out, as a connecting link in the chain of argument, the evidence of fact in Korea. To understand this we shall have to take a short *excursus* into a peculiarity of that most peculiar and fascinating of studies, the Japanese language.

The Japanese language is based, not upon an alphabet, but upon a syllabary. All Japanese words are built up from a choice out of a set of only forty-eight possible syllables. Now, were their words as long in syllables as ours are in letters, combinations would be even more numerous than with us, where they are practically limitless. But this is not the case. By far the greater number of words are either dissyllabic or trisyllabic, longer ones than these being mostly old compounds, some of which still retain their early meaning, while others, like the inflectional terminations of verbs, have lost it. It is therefore the same as if our words were only two or three letters long. Naturally combinations are very restricted; and from this dearth it follows that words of the same sound, though of quite different meaning, are necessarily exceedingly numerous. This quality renders it, of all languages, the most suitable for *doubles ententes*. Indeed, if it be true, as we are told, that speech was the gift of the gods to men, the Japanese language must have been their particular *bonne bouche* to punsters. But in addition to those who play upon it from malice aforethought, the student, who is pleased to dabble in derivations, is constantly lured on into the most humorous and yet the most plausible of mistakes. He is forever making brilliant discoveries which turn out to be utterly erroneous. Sometimes they but furnish disappointment to the elated discoverer, but occasionally they find their way into print and yield amusement to many. Let me give an example of the latter. The word "mei" means "the eye," another "mei" means "clear, remarkable, pre-eminent;" "butsu" means "to strike," and another "butsu," "a thing." Now, the word "mei-butsu," compounded of "mei" (remarkable) and "butsu" (a thing), denotes the remarkable objects of a place, — the sights, what a traveller at once asks to be shown in a strange town. The meaning of the compound

the translator knew. He was, however, ignorant, as the sequel proves, of its true composition. He proceeded, therefore, to derive it quite ingeniously, though unfortunately not quite correctly, from "mei" (the eye) and "butsu" (to strike), denoting, as he explained, that which strikes the eye.

Here the question naturally arises, Why is this derivation not as justifiable as the former? In such a choice of possibilities, how does one tell, after all, which is right and which wrong? The answer brings us to the second step in such investigations; and that answer is, by a reference to the Chinese character which represents the word. The correctness or incorrectness of a derivation is proved by this touchstone of a foreign ideographic writing. For the Japanese "kana," or "borrowed script," which is also occasionally used, is simply phonetic, and tells us nothing but the pronunciation; just as to a foreigner "bear" (a beast) and "bear" (to carry) are as perfectly non-committal on paper as they are non-committal in sound. Such ambiguities happen but rarely with us, but they are constantly present in Japanese. In these emergencies the Chinese pictorial writing, in common use in writing or printing in Japan, steps in, and furnishes, in a somewhat new way, exactness to speech.

With this second step in the investigation the Japanese themselves are commonly content to pause; but, in point of fact, this is not the end of the matter. Though it is true that he who takes as his guide, in Japanese philology, the Chinese characters will avoid mistakes, he will never rise, on the other hand, to generalizations; for the Chinese characters were first adopted in Japan some sixteen centuries ago, and the Japanese words existed long before that. An appeal to them, therefore, simply gives us what was considered to be the meaning of the component parts of any word at the time the language was crystallized into writing. What they meant

before this, we do not gather; we only learn what they had then come to mean.

Now, to get to the bottom of the hat-umbrella question, we must go back to this anteliteral state, before writing had been introduced. In Japanese, the word for hat is "kasa;" and it is the same word, exactly, as the Korean "kasi." Now the word "kasa" is not one, but many. There are no less than seven given in Hepburn's Dictionary. But though the seven are at present expressed by quite different Chinese characters, and most Japanese would consider them entirely separate, they are in truth, most of them and probably all, only differentiated meanings of the same original root-word, — a word which meant, as near as we can now judge, a round covering for the head. So much we shall learn from what they denote to-day.

At first, apparently, the expression was applied to man. Then, by a sort of impersonation, it was extended to objects in Nature, and then even to manufactured articles. Everything that could be conceived as having a round-top covering was said to possess the kasa. The part so specified must be on the top; it must be round, and it must be susceptible of removal. If it fulfilled these three conditions, it was just as much a kasa as was the hat of man.

Thus — to begin with the more august — the halo seen around the moon on the approach of rainy weather is called "kasa." She is preparing to protect herself, so they fancifully imagined, from the coming storm. Then certain kinds of nuts have a kasa (shell). The nidus of a certain disease is a kasa, and from its outward marks the name was extended to the disease itself. Then a bowl is covered with its kasa (lid), and is spoken of as bonneted. A bowl of soup, for instance, is always thus brought in to you, with its hat on. So, in like manner, an umbrella is a kasa. So poor was the old speech, that the people in their early objective simplicity could not

distinguish, nor did they care to do so, the many forms which the Chinese taught them at a later date to discriminate.

Originally, then, both hat and umbrella were alike called "kasa." Taken alone, the argument from language proves only the paucity in expression of the early race, although it may hint at more; but taken in connection with what we find in Korea, it is very strong evidence toward the original oneness, elsewhere as well as in the peninsula, of the umbrella and the hat. At first the umbrella was a hat.

The Japanese intuitively recognized the unity even in the case of foreign specimens. When the European umbrella was introduced among them, they called it at once, not inappropriately, a "bat hat." So gloomy a specimen of its species, with its thin tough membrane stretched on skinny, wiry arms, suggested to them nothing less hideous than that denizen of neither sunlight nor darkness, the poor outcast of both mammals and birds. It made its way, however, in spite of the opprobrium, even among the Japanese themselves; so did the straw hat of America, which fairly overran the larger cities, much as the whiteweed from Europe took possession of our own fields, ousting the native species.

So much for the hat. But this suggests a word as to how the Koreans learned to write; for before they went to school to China, they, like their neighbors and cousins the Japanese, had apparently no system of writing. In addition to the borrowed Chinese characters, both peoples have now a phonetic system of writing. The Japanese "kana" is simply a mutilated collection of certain Chinese characters (which it is not our purpose to explain here); the Korean "önmun," as it is called, has quite a different genealogy. It was, in all probability, the outcome of a diplomatic banquet.

Once a year Korea despatched an embassy to the court at Pekin. Her ambassadors were sent to carry to China the

annual tribute. They tarried some days in the imperial city, and regularly, once during their stay, were invited to dine at the palace. The occasion was a red-letter day to the diplomats, for it was the only glimpse Korea ever got of foreign society. There, for a few hours, her ambassadors sat at table between distinguished visitors from all parts of the wide East, — envoys from Japan and Manchuria, travellers from Arabia, wise men from India; for the dragon-throne was at that time not the secluded spot we might suppose it, but one of the meeting centres of the known world. The *convives*, too, knew something about one another; and they squabbled for precedence in their allotted seats, when a mistake was made, with a comparative sense of position worthy a modern European court. Naturally, the Koreans were all ears. Undoubtedly each guest vied with his neighbor in the narration of improbable national tales and the vaunting of national curiosities. What they said needed not, however, the gloss of falsity to be startling; and in the course of conversation they gave one another many ideas as true as they were new; and the time, too, tinged everything with the color of rose, and made it seem desirable. In this way, one year, the Korean envoys found themselves, on their journey homeward, with a copy of the Sanscrit alphabet tucked away in the capacious sleeves of their ample tunics.

The gift commended itself to the scholars of Korea, and was adopted, with changes, into the present "önmun." It was an alphabet, and theoretically it is still so retained to-day; but the native tongue was too poor in sounds to suit so elaborate a system, and the sow that was washed returned again to her wallowing in the mire. In practice the possibilities of an alphabet were degraded into the fetters of a syllabary, and as such is it now taught in the schools. But succeeding generations, with more patriotism than justice, thought so good an invention

worthy a native mind, and set on foot the following myth to account for it.

There was once a certain king who, contrary to the custom of the usual king, realized to some extent the duties of his position, and spent his time in concocting schemes for the amelioration of society. It occurred, one day, to this wise monarch that learning would be more easily spread among the common people if a phonetic system of writing could be introduced to supersede the laborious memorizing of the Chinese character; for, as it was, a long study and a retentive memory were needed to learn the very means of learning, whereas, if what they read represented what they spoke, the two studies could go, as they should, linked hand in hand. So he set himself to invent a bond as simple as possible. This he soon succeeded in doing to his entire satisfaction. But then arose a more difficult problem, not unknown in more advanced literary compositions, — How should he get it before the public? He could, of course, launch it with his own sanction, but would it be taken up? Probably not; for the people were too addicted to precedent to be amenable to change. So he decided to try the effect of the anonymous, backed by the supernatural.

He gathered several leaves, and in the secrecy of what stood him in lieu of study, traced upon them in honey the signs he had composed. Then he took and scattered them in his garden, that the worms might, in eating the honey, leave behind his signs upon the leaves. What worms they were that were so fond of sweets, it would be disrespectful to the myth to inquire. Suffice it that whether it was their natural instinct or not, they were obliging enough to do in this case what was expected of them. When they had performed their part in the plot, the king quite innocently invited his courtiers to stroll with him about the garden. In the course of their

walk, they happened on the leaves; one of the courtiers, noticing them, stooped and picked one up. The rest gathered round to examine it. Such curious markings they had never before seen; and his Majesty ingenuously suggested that perhaps they contained some hidden revelation from the gods, and proposed that any one who could, should undertake to decipher it. As none vouchsafed any explanation, he graciously gave them three days in which to consider the matter. At the end of that time they were still, not unnaturally, notionless, with the exception of one young man whose want of years, no doubt, was reason for his assurance, and who pretended to have conceived an idea; but he asked for an extension of three days more. They were granted him. At their expiration he asked for three more. These too were granted. Whether there was collusion or not, is wisely omitted from the story. Silence of course gives consent to suspicions. At the end of nine days he announced that the leaves embodied — what the king had put there. So evident a revelation needed only to be known to be believed, and the king and the prophet then invented together the sounds they should severally represent. To this same king is due, it is said, the invention of movable type.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FLOWER-STREAM TEMPLE.

SUCH a thing as a temple does not exist in Söul. To see Korean religious architecture, therefore, as well as religious observances, one must go into the country, and the farther from the haunts of men the better; for the monastic half is very nearly all that remains to-day of Buddhism throughout the peninsula.

The finest buildings are said to be a long way off from the capital, in among the mountains to the north. There, unmolested by irreverent man, religion still keeps something of her former glory. But there are others, though of less magnificence, to be seen nearer Söul. One of these lies some seven miles away, on the eastern spurs of the great Cock's-comb peak; and in consequence of its comparative proximity to town, it has acquired no mean reputation, — a reputation, however, which is principally due to reasons anything but religious. It is one of the most noted spots for pleasure-excursions. But this does not in the least detract from its sanctity nor from the interest of the place itself; for the selecting of a monastery as a place for a scene of revels is a practice common in Korea, as it is in China.

It was in this double capacity, as a shelter at once for the cowl and the courtier, that I was one day taken to see it. I had expressed a desire to go there for its own sake; but I was not sorry that the Koreans deemed it wise that the means

should in some sort justify the end. It had been decided to make of the visit an eventful excursion. We were to take with us a band of musicians and strolling actors, several singing-girls and my Japanese cook, not to speak of chairs, tables, and other minor conveniences. The musicians, cook, and baggage were to be sent out ahead to prepare for our arrival, while the singing-girls, as agreeable companions, were to accompany us.

Accordingly, on the morning of the day appointed, my respectable abode became the scene of much bustle and some unavoidable preliminary festivity. Servants of all descriptions and varying degrees of usefulness hurried hither and thither, industriously giving orders to others, and occasionally doing something themselves. Bundles of the most outlandish look and enormous size were made up as best they might be, and strapped on the backs of coolies who stood ready to receive them; while conveyances of various kinds lay scattered promiscuously about the courtyard waiting for future occupants, and their bearers or drawers, as the case might be, added to the general confusion by lounging about the place with nothing particular to do. Finally, after a commotion worthy of the breaking camp of a badly disorganized army, the baggage got off.

The advance-guard despatched, the girls began to arrive. They quite filled the house with their presence, — the more so for the ordinary absence of femininity. They tripped about, with a smile here and a word there, and thus enlivened the repasts which by this time had succeeded to the bustle of preparation. At this juncture a friend from the legation, who had been invited to go with us, put in an appearance, thus adding still another element to so motley a party, while he contributed one more to the heterogeneous assemblage of vehicles in the outer courtyard.

However, shortly after noon we had got ready to start, and, tucking ourselves into our boxes, were lifted from the ground and carried out of the gateway. Friends, geishas, and retainers, we made a goodly company, and strung out along the street in the most approved Eastern style. The weather was clear and cold, everything fairly sparkling as only the sunshine of a northern winter's day, with the snow in patches on the ground and the blue above, can sparkle. It was a laughing, merry sort of day. The boys in the streets, as we passed through, seemed to find it so, too. I had never seen them so lively before; for they are usually rather quiet, as we count boys. But they were in the thick of a most interesting game. It was called "the game of war." Bands of youthful warriors, armed with stout sticks, were coursing the streets, and more particularly the corners of the narrower alleys, — for every boy knows how much more interest lurks in the *double entente* of the corner and the mysterious possibility of the alley, — and would appear, whirl, and disappear again with the suddenness of a flock of sparrows.

The game, as it was explained to me, had at least the merit of simplicity; it might almost be looked upon as innate in idea and execution. It consisted in the two parties to the sport belaboring one another with sticks or clubs until one side had had enough for the time being, when they would take to their heels to rally again at the next corner. No games in Korea are ever limited in the age of those who may play them. Grown men enter into the sport with as much zest as children. As this one is rather violent for city streets, and would greatly incommode the passers-by if men indulged in it, and also, probably, from the greater decorum of city habits, it is limited to small boys. But in the country, where no such restraining influences act, almost a business is made out of the pleasure. Whole villages engage in it, and blows sometimes result in death. These

are unfortunate casualties; but in spite of them the occasion is one of great jollity, and at the end of the contest a bull is slaughtered for the victors by the vanquished, and a grand feast made, in which all the company join.

The position of the Northeast Gate — the one we went out by — is particularly striking. On both sides the ground falls abruptly away, and you look down, on the inner, upon the roofs of the houses, and on the outer side over a valley hemmed in by ranges of sharp hills. So far is it from the city's centre that there are no suburbs beyond. You descend at once into the country.

At first we passed over rather a desolate plain; then we struggled up over a low rocky pass, and down again into a valley of rice-fields. By this time the last to set out had caught up with the first; and a merry party we made, winding slowly across country, with occasional halts for the chair-coolies to rest, — for chairs and three imported kuruma formed the means of conveyance. The quality, as well as the quantity of the company, rendered progress slow. Our advance was one continued frolic. The bracing air and the spirits of the travellers made decorum impossible. One by one we deserted our chairs and took to strolling. Then we exchanged conveyances all round. Then we played amateur jinrikisha men, and dragged the girls in the kuruma as fast as we could run, to their great delight and very near upsetting. This caused a slight panic, which resulted in a pause, which we seized to serve out refreshments, and so help restore the equilibrium of the mind, if not of the body. Then we tried the ice that covered the fields, to the horror of the fair ones and our own discomfiture; and so in pastimes suggested by the moment and varied the next, we compassed five miles of Korean road, and found ourselves, toward the end of the afternoon, at the entrance to a wood on the eastern side of the Cock's-comb Mountain.

We left the open and turned into the wood. All at once the spirit of the party changed. Everything had suddenly become quiet, — the solemn silence of a winter's forest. The trees were large and mostly deciduous, of a dull neutral brown, and the snow lay in virgin white patches by the side of the path. The spot was impressive, from a sort of lonely beauty. A hush, as of sadness, seemed to be a part of the very air. Only the sound of our own voices and the noise of our tramping broke startlingly upon the universal silence.

Soon we came to where the forest narrowed into a strip on either side of a ravine, — the bed of a frozen brook. On one side of the brook climbed up the path. In the centre were rocks and ice, and towering on either hand sharp spurs of the mountain of hardened sand. But the trees shut these out from view, and partially concealed the real formation of the gully. We ascended the glen for a few minutes, turned to the left, came to a sort of natural vantage-ground that commanded a view of what lay below, and the next moment stood, amid an expectant crowd of monks, in the courtyard of the monastery.

If our voices had seemed strange amid the deadness of a winter's forest, our quartering ourselves in our riotous mood upon a set of secluded monks appeared wellnigh sacrilegious. It was hard to persuade ourselves at first that we were but following the customs of the country. To go out of town in the depth of winter to hold high revels in a lonely monastery! Rabelais would have envied us the situation. The good, simple monks, however, saw nothing at all odd in the proceeding. Though by profession out of the world, they evinced a naïve curiosity for the glimpse they were being given of what went on within it, and especially that part of it which came from beyond sea. They gathered around us, and welcomed us in; and so, just as the gray afternoon of a short winter's day was

deepening into night, we mounted the flight of outer stone steps and entered the hall of the main building.

The spot is called "The Flower-Stream Temple." In spring, no doubt, it deserves its name. At the time we saw it, its grandeur, its very forbidding austerity, was its charm. The situation seemed to be the appropriate setting of the monastic spirit, — the ravine, shut off from the world beyond; the stream, bound fast in icy slumber; and the pines, as they stood guard over it, themselves the semblance of a living death.

The monastery was Buddhist. The Shinto faith, or what corresponds to it in Korea, has no monasteries, — only temples properly so-called, and shrines; and the sect of Buddhism to which it belonged, was what we may compare, among Christian sects, to the Roman Catholic. For Buddhism can boast as many sects and hair-splitting refinements of belief as Christianity. In the first place, there are the great northern and southern divisions. The Indian Buddhists belong to the latter, and the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean to the former. Then each of these is subdivided into sects innumerable. There are some which correspond very nearly to the Protestant Church with us. These Protestant sects — for they are really protestant themselves against abuses which have crept in to the older forms — are practically confined to Japan. The Korean churches are mostly those which have clung to the old ways.

The outward expressions of these sects are as various as the corresponding ones in Europe, and the expressions themselves bear a very striking resemblance to their counterparts at home. A European ignorant of the existence of Buddhism, standing in the Flower-Stream Temple, would have believed himself to be in a Roman Catholic monastery. The tonsure, the sackcloth, the beads, the service, the bells, and a hundred other familiar sights and sounds, would all have suggested to him the monks of the other side of the world. He would have

recognized an Eastern coloring, but he would have thought it transplanted Rome. This is what actually happened to the Catholic missionaries when they first came to China. They stood aghast at what they saw. For there they were face to face, in a strange land, with what they had firmly supposed to be their own peculiar property. They were at a loss what to say till, their subtlety coming to their rescue, they hit upon an explanation. Without hesitation they pronounced it the personal work of the devil. "You have indeed got," they said to the people, "the outward forms of the true faith; and the only difference between you and us is that your god is our devil." So encouraging and flattering a way to put it to those whom they hoped to convert!

As to the principles of Buddhism, so much has been said, and much of it so well said, that anything here would be unnecessary; but it will not be wholly out of place to say a word upon a certain prevalent misconception.

We have, many of us, been brought up with a holy horror of idols, and all of us use the term "idolatrous" as a convenient adjective to apply to the outward symbols of any belief not included within the pale of Christianity. We were first made familiar with the monstrosities from the writings of the ancient Jews; then they were shown as existing to-day among savage tribes; and lastly the early Catholic missionaries, on travelling thither, peopled for us the far-Eastern religions with them. Now, the fact is that they did exist in olden times, that they do exist to-day in the worship of savages; but they no more exist in the civilized religion of Buddha than they do in the Roman Catholic Church. If Buddhists worship what we are pleased to call idols, then the Roman Church does; if this last be denied to be the case, then as truly must we deny their existence in the worship of Buddha. The exact positing of what is actually believed in any faith is always a

difficult matter, and it becomes doubly so when this faith calls in the aid of outward expression; for insensibly the mind tends to clothe the immaterial in a manner presentable to the senses. The deterioration has been observable in all beliefs, save those, like the Mohammedan, which strictly forbid the fashioning of such aids. At first the thing fashioned, the picture or the statue, is but man's attempt to represent to himself, and thus remind him of, the unseen. As an Indian Buddhist once put it, "It is like the picture of an absent friend, which we gaze on till the tears roll down our cheeks; yet we weep not at the picture, but at the thought it has called up." Insensibly, however, the man gets to cling to what little he can grasp, and we are at last horrified to discover that it is actually the image itself he has come to worship. The higher minds of the faith continue to see beyond; but the mass, the great majority, are to all intents and purposes sunk in idolatry. It does not matter a tittle whether the belief be Buddhism or Christianity. This has nothing to do with the purity or grandeur of the two beliefs, which is quite another thing. For the argument, it is enough that they both worship spirit.

While I am speaking of the two great European and Asiatic faiths, I may mention an amusing example of how subtlety in the interpreting of religious dogmas is not confined to the Jesuits. The great Protestant sect in Japan is called "The Shin Sect." Now, it is often the case in a language as poor in sounds as the Japanese, that many different words have one and the same pronunciation. This is the case with the word "shin." Among other meanings it has two, — that of "new" and that of "true." Now, the founders of the sect were modest, and called it "The New Sect." But with time its adherents waxed bolder, and galled by the humble meaning of their self-chosen appellative, they decided to have its coat of arms altered, — that is, they changed the character by which it was

written, while still keeping the old pronunciation. From that time they wrote it "The True Sect," and then with unblushing effrontery maintained that this had always been its name.

The teaching of religion is to humble all men to an equality. Not less is it the virtue of its garb to make their appearance one. Dress goes far toward changing physiognomy. As I stood scrutinizing these monks, I saw their likeness to the Japanese in a way I had never seen it before. Clad in their every-day costume, their hair arranged in different ways, the resemblance is not very marked; but here, in the same sack-cloth dress, the hair alike shaven, no one could fail to be struck by the common origin of the two races.

We then started to wander about the place. The plan of the monastery buildings was as follows. The road up the ravine simply ended in the outer courtyard, without the interposition of gate of any kind, but there was a stone-wall on the side facing the ravine. On the courtyard fronted the main building, whose central hall was the refectory. This had been given up to our entertainment. Back of this was another courtyard, upon which, opposite the refectory, were two temples, consecrated, to speak popularly, to different deities, and full, of course, of the usual images, bronzes, drums, artificial flowers, etc. On the sides were smaller buildings connected indirectly with the paraphernalia of worship. In a semicircle, outside of these, and entered not from the inner courtyard but from without, were the smaller houses that served for dwellings to the monks. To the right of the main building, and projecting beyond it, were certain houses forming one with the building itself. They were used apparently for rooms of study. Though the spot upon which the whole was built was level compared with its surroundings, still the ground fell away enough in front to raise these advance buildings high into the air and give them an eyry-like appearance. There was

nothing rich in architecture or ornament about the place, such as would invariably have been the case in Japan. All was very plain, the plainness of poverty. There were only some rather quaint articles in the side buildings of the inner court-yard, one of them especially, a huge wooden fish carved in the most grotesque manner and suspended by head and tail from the ceiling.

While we were strolling round the place, waiting for dinner, the bell on the larger of the two buildings began to toll in that peculiar manner so distinctive of the far-East. Instead of a tongue to be moved inside, the bell is struck from without. This makes it easier to regulate the cadence. This is at first very slow; then, ever increasing, it grows faster and faster, until the blows lose themselves in one continuous swell, and then it winds up with three taps to bring the thought back again to attention. Then the whole is repeated at suitable intervals. It announced a service in the bigger of the two temples in the inner court, and so we went to peer in. Our fellow on-lookers courteously fell back to allow us to mount to the highest step of the flight that led up to the temple, and thus to stand as near as it was proper to do, without taking off our shoes. The service had already begun, and by the time we got there a dozen monks, arrayed in their finest garments, were solemnly walking in procession round and round in an endless circle, chanting as they did so, while a small novice sat beating a drum in one corner. We were of as much interest to them as they were to us; and those of them whose acquaintance we had already made did not hesitate to smile and (as near as they were capable of the gesture) wink at us, as in their motion they passed in front. This conduct was the more pardonable on their part, as they did not understand a single word of what they were saying. The litany, or whatever it may be called, was in Sanscrit,

which they had learned by heart and were now mispronouncing. Even in itself, however, the ceremony was not particularly solemn; there was too much motion in it. But there are services which are not wanting in great dignity.

I once had one given for me at a monastery on the top of a mountain in the interior of Japan, which was very impressive. The buildings and their settings were imposing; the music weird, but nevertheless human; the prayers solemn and grand; and it was all for the modest votive offering of fifty cents. It was there that I first appreciated far-Eastern instruments of music. They were first used in temples, and are indeed in keeping with their birthplace.

How many times the priests in this case continued to follow the mystic circle I do not know, for having witnessed several revolutions we concluded that we had seen enough, and so came away; but we could still hear the cadence of the chanting wafted abroad as we strolled through the buildings and their courts. Thus slowly but surely time bore us along, amid monastic sights and sounds, toward what was to be the crowning event of the day, — the anything but monastic revels of the evening.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WINTER REVELS IN A MONASTERY.

AT last arrived the hour for the feast. In the main hall of the refectory had been spread a table, under the direction of the Japanese cook, as nearly after foreign customs as possible, and around it, with an air of empty expectancy, were ranged foreign chairs. How the tutelary deity — *ex machina* — managed this last touch, I do not know. I think the baggage-carriers might possibly have explained their appearance. They were, at least, appropriate; for religion alone in Korea consecrates the use of chairs.

The dinner itself did not differ materially from such hybrids of its class as I have already described. It was the room and the bystanders that were curious; for all that side of the hall next the doors was packed with monks and retainers, their faces perfectly stolid, so great was their interest.

I am sanguine enough to look forward to an epoch in the future when we shall consider it improper to make of feeding hours an excuse for meeting our fellow-man. I am aware that economy of time is a factor on the other side, but I trust this consideration will not always rule paramount. Convenience, as it helped start the custom, must ever promote certain necessary gatherings on those occasions; but let us keep the practice strictly within bounds, like any other bodily necessity.

I need hardly say that I did not then put my idiosyncrasy into execution. I suffered myself to be content with the actions

of the geisha in this respect, who sat between the guests and assisted at, without partaking of, the banquet. They were there to amuse others and not themselves. They ate, therefore, only such things as were vouchsafed them as tidbits or love-tokens by the guests. Every now and then one or the other of them would break forth into song. The songs were conventional wails or chants, with only the plaintive character in them to please my ear. I confess I rather preferred the fair singers when silent.

Not to weary the reader with another description of a prolonged feast, — the only excuse for whose length lay in the actual eating of it, — we will suppose the dinner over, the table mysteriously hidden away, and all traces of the late banquet removed. The room has returned from its pretence of Europe back to its Asiatic coloring. In the centre hangs a lamp not too bright at best, and shaded by a rectangular screen of glass decorated with brilliantly painted flowers. On the left is a still more gaudily painted one, while opposite, as a pendant, hangs a board inscribed with the spiritual light of a Sanscrit text. We can none of us read what it says; and yet, strange thought! it is the only intellectual link that binds entertainers and entertained. The ideas which our remote relatives committed to writing these people borrowed and repeat to-day.

Ranged around the nearer end are the guests and the geisha, sitting upon chairs or squatting upon quilts on the floor, as convenience or the force of habit dictates. In a circle in the centre sit, cross-legged, the musicians, — later to change to actors, for they are both in one. Beyond them is a dense crowd. Tier above tier rises a very sea of human faces, each face a study of emotions, — curiosity, expectancy, delight. Monks with their shaven heads, their brown cassocks, and girdles of hempen rope, and around their necks or hanging from their waists their rosaries of black beads, stand and stare, the personification of

attention. Novices, with boyish faces all aglow with wonderment, eagerly drink in the scene before them and forget who and where they are. Interspersed with these are our own retainers, their colored clothes and black felt hats in striking contrast to the sober monastic garb. They too have forgotten time and place, and lose themselves in what they see. The nearer ones are seated on the floor, and the farther stand up against the wall. The place is packed, and the doors are blocked with the eager lookers-on. Shaven crowns and huge hats, saints and soldiers, stand side by side in one dense, indiscriminate mass. Distinctions are lost in curiosity; for the calling of the holy men in no wise debarred them from witnessing the entertainment, and servants in Korea are always privileged to see anything that is going on. An atmosphere laden with tobacco smoke adds a finishing touch of haze.

At first the performers gave us some music. There was the usual complement of six instruments; and they had agreed to live as happily together as was possible, which amounted to agreeing to disagree, as my ear suggested. As to any concerted action between them, it sounded to me conspicuous by its absence. Fortunately the flutes and the two stringed fiddles had come to some understanding about sharing the field and not interfering more than half the time with the others. As for the drums, being of neutral sound, they harmonized with everybody.

The music stopped, and the interlude was employed to serve us tea, which we drank as usual, after the Chinese fashion. Among ourselves we all began to feel very much at home. With some of these men I had travelled many thousand miles. I had sat with them in boxes at theatres of our own kind, as I was now about to witness their own nearest representative of the stage. Others I had known intimately for months in their own capital. Even with the geisha I was on a tolerably

familiar footing, for the same fair ones had been called to many an entertainment at which I had been a guest. One of them especially was kind; indeed, she was the only one who from the very first had taken to the tiger-like barbarian. With the others acquaintance had been a slow process, not unlike the taming of gazelles. The maiden bore the name of "The Fragrant Iris." She now sat near me, murmuring softly her very small vocabulary of Japanese words under the mistaken but touching impression that such was the language of my heart. Her pretty coquetry stood out in quaint relief against the background of monkish faces that, now that the performers were resting, were turned in mute attention upon us. Winsome she was; and as my eyes, wandering over her jet-black tresses, simple as the silver pin that bound them, fell at last upon her upturned face, in the smile I found there I forgot that I was foreign and my home so many thousand miles away.

I waked from my dream of beauty with a start. The actors were about to begin. Now was coming what was to be the *chef-d'œuvre* of the evening, — a series of character representations. They are the nearest relative of the stage that exists in Korea. There was virtually but one performer; for though one or two others took part in it as necessary accessories, they were accessories a long way after the fact, and served rather as shadows to bring the star into brighter relief. As for him, he was simply capital. Properties there were none, nor was there any stage. He stood there before us with only such disguise as he could improvise on the spur of the moment. A few more or a few less clothes, — that was all. Seizing with a master hand upon some trait of Korean manners, he would sketch it to just that touch beyond the life which makes of the every-day the comic. Foreigners and natives, we were alike carried away.

Now he is a countryman seeking audience of a noble, in order to prefer some longed-for request, and trying by a thousand wiles to persuade the guards to let him in. He is a mixture of effrontery and winsomeness. His cajoleries would certainly have moved any one but a professional watch-dog. At last Cerberus himself is won; and the rustic, having succeeded in fairly forcing an entrance, is suffered to pass, and stands in the great man's presence. His whole manner changes. Of a sudden he is as respectful as you please. Servility would find in him a model. He is simple and yet eloquent, eminently a man to have his requests granted; and this without any help from a stage-setting, with nothing but an imaginary line he has drawn upon the floor, and a very poor sham noble to address.

Now he is a wayfarer among the mountains, suddenly finding himself face to face with a tiger; and then, in a twinkling, he has become the tiger himself. I am sure the original could hardly have been more blood-curdling in his growl. We all instinctively shudder.

Then he is a counterfeit blind man attempting, by this disguise, to traverse the city after dark, and so evade the night patrol. Blind men are exempt from the curfew law; and therefore to become such for the crossing is a dodge much in vogue among the astute, and consequently the impersonation is hugely appreciated by the audience.

Perhaps the best of all was his take-off of the tobacco-vender in difficulties. He is trying to sell his stuff, and in spite of consummate skill is continually failing. He is just on the point of persuading some one to buy, much against that some one's will, when a misunderstanding takes place, and he narrowly escapes a row in consequence; and then, each particular dispute passed, he relapses again into his inimitable cry of "Tobacco to sell!" all his previous slyness sunk in the automatic call and the no less automatic gesture.

So one impersonation followed another. The performance knew not time. We were carried through *scènes de la vie de province, scènes de la vie Söullienne.* Tigers, rustics, blind men, all passed before us in turn, until the evening had long ago waned and the small hours of the morning had begun to increase.

It was time to end. The performer, who smiled all over as we tried to convey to him our delight, was served with a supper; and then we were shown to our cells. As I fell off to sleep, I found myself repeating his catching cry of "Tobacco to sell!" and the echo of it still rings in my ears to-day.

The morning's sun found me with difficulty as it struggled through a bit of paper that covered an aperture high up on one side of a little cell. It was the room of one of the monks that had been given me in preference to sleeping on the scene of the last night's revels, which had been the original intention of my hosts. Two screens and the wadded quilt that served me for bed were all that the cell contained. Two screens seem, perhaps, hardly the most appropriate furniture for a room not above eight feet square. But it is not as furniture that they are used. They are settings of works of art. They are not for the purpose of hiding persons in the same room from one another, but as a means of showing off pictures; and they vary in height from two feet to eight. One of these was so well painted that I longed to have it greet me good-morning elsewhere. Later in the day, when day-dreams had given place to realities, I tried to buy it. Of course it belonged to a friend, and of course he was off on a journey into the country, so they said; and I had to content myself, in place of possession, with a polite excuse.

We spent the day in amusements out-of-doors, disporting ourselves in various ways up and down the glen. Some of us took strolls to see the ravine and get distant glimpses of the

valley below; some played at the Korean pitchpenny, — a game highly in vogue at that time in the metropolis, — and the fair ones found great enjoyment in the riding by turns of a friend's pony. Merriment ran riot; and the shouts and laughter came ringing up to me, clear and sharp from across the frozen ravine, as, alone, I wandered about in search of photographic sites. Memories of Christmas parties on the other side of our globe, now long since passed away, rose up before me in spite of the changed *personnel*, and I paused in my walk and listened to the distant sounds of mirth as they came fainter and fainter from farther down the glen. There is a sadness in that sharp metallic ring from a dead landscape, where sound itself wakes no sympathetic chord and returns in echo back into the air, — a sadness born of death. And the fir-trees and the snow softened with a touch of pathos the revelry of man.

About a quarter of a mile above the monastery, the ravine comes to an end, and here the timber ceases. Beyond this rise the naked spurs of the mountain. Formed of very fine gravel or sand, it is almost a marvel that they can lie so precipitously. The ridges are equally sharp in front and on the sides, and look like huge buttresses to the central peaks. To get upon them, though a sharp ascent, is a short one. By mounting directly back of the buildings, a hundred yards suffice to sink the little valley and all it contains as completely as if it had ceased to be. No sooner had we reached this desert, tilted on edge, as it were, than the good priests, who had clung to me in my stroll, warned me to go no farther for fear of tigers. Such a warning seemed quite unnecessary. Bare sand-hills strike one, perhaps, as hardly the most suitable of places for the animals. The higher we got, the more urgent became their caution. We saw no tigers, of course; but they exist nevertheless, and must at times molest the monastery, to be so ever present a subject of thought. The view above was

very striking. Ridge above ridge ran up in front till the light color of the sand changed to the darker tints of rock that formed the higher peaks. These were like jagged teeth, so sharp that the snow could only lie on them in patches. But yet, singular to tell and more singular still to see, along the very summit ran an outlying branch of the city's wall, which could be distinctly made out, even at the distance we were away. It was one of the flank walls, — not a portion of the girdle itself, but joining it on a part of the mountain nearer town. In it a large gate stood out to view, apparently the counterpart of the city gateways; yet it was several miles away from Söul, and was raised some thousands of feet above the city.

The taking of some photographs in the inner courtyard brought the afternoon to a close, and helped to perpetuate, at least to the eye, some of the features of so strange a scene. Against the same background, that of the wooden fish, priests and players alike were taken in turn, — the first in their robes of ceremony, their hands crossed in prayer. Their faces were very prepossessing. As a rule, a monkish life is conducive to faces that are either stupid or sly; but in the far-East the effect is, for some reason, to take away their ordinary cunning look and leave only intelligence and goodness behind. Ten minutes later, their place was occupied by the players in an attitude anything but devout. I had asked for the tobacco scene, and the actor did his best to reproduce the motion that had so delighted us. So ludicrous was it that several of the band failed to keep their countenances, in spite of what was to them a most impressive moment. The monks, too, were all anxious to see, and the photograph came out lined by an avenue of eager faces; for it was impossible wholly to curb the good men's curiosity, and, say what one would, to make them stand back. There they therefore appear now, some looking one way, some the other, uncertain whether the camera or the

actor is, after all, the more engrossing of two such interesting sights.

The third day came only too soon. The morning was all bustle; it took several hours to pack up, ready for transportation, the thousand things we had brought with us. Then with great regret we prepared to forsake a spot around whose desolate grandeur we had wrapped so many brighter memories. We took our leave of the good monks, gathered in a group on the steps. They were sincerely sorry to bid us good-by, and it seemed as if indeed we were taking the sunlight away with us. We passed out of the courtyard and down the path, and then, amid the icy stillness of the ravine, followed one another in scattered file under the towering gloomy firs. We talked but little, as if afraid of rousing the echoes that in sorrow had fallen asleep. The place was too much in keeping with the feeling of departure for speech; it had itself the semblance of farewell; and a wave of sadness swept over me at the thought that the winter revels at the monastery of the Flower-Stream Temple had already become a thing of the past. Like their own winter's sunset, they seem, as I look back upon them, a flush of color through a rift in the distant clouds, lighting up for one brief moment the snowy landscape and the sombre firs; and then it settles back to the gray and the cold again, and earth and sky look as if it all had never been.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TIME.

CUT off as we were from the scientific world (there were only nine of us foreigners in Söul, not counting Von Möllendorff's two babies, and omitting the Japanese, whom, however, we always reckoned as of ourselves), we lived in much uncertainty as to the time of day. The officers of the American war-vessels that relieved one another on station at Chemulpo, kindly gave us their own time when they came up for a few days to visit Minister Foote. Those of us who got this first, imparted it with a feeling of much importance to our more benighted friends. But the English teacher of the school was an enterprising man; and, not content with living on borrowed reckoning, he resolved to get it for himself. For this purpose he stretched a couple of strings in his front yard from a corner of an outer shed to the top of his roof, the one vertically above the other, and adjusted them both due north and south one night by means of the pole-star. He then the next day observed the meridian transit of the sun over his strings through a piece of smoked glass. This ingenious contrivance gave him apparent noon, which he then corrected to mean noon by the help of a New England Farmer's Almanac. Meanwhile I played the parts of sympathetic friend and scientific critic combined. My questionable quota to the general information consisted in pointing out to

him his probable error. This necessary but to him rather disheartening calculation gave a result of about four minutes for the amount he was probably wrong. But, as I consolingly added, he might of course be exactly right, while on the other hand I was forced to admit he might be as much as six minutes out of the way; and without a nautical almanac or a series of astronomical observations on the pole-star, it was impossible to tell which. However we accepted — he and I — his noon as provisionally correct, so much more dignified did it strike us to have our own time than somebody else's, even if that other did happen to be more exact.

Time is purely a Western necessity. The very impersonality and consequent individuality of the far-Oriental renders him superior to it. He has no engagements to meet, and therefore he needs no punctuality to meet them. Perhaps no better comment upon the far-Eastern want of this last virtue need be made than to mention that the Japanese invariably appear at any entertainment an hour and a half before the time for which they are invited. Such premature unpunctuality used at first to cause me, as unprepared host, no slight embarrassment. In Korea these surprise parties fortunately do not happen, but simply because all day is given up to the feast, and there is no such thing as being too early.

Still, to a certain extent, the Koreans deign to recognize time as in some sort a sum of parts; and as their methods of dividing it have a quaintness of their own, it seems to me not uninteresting to say something about it.

"Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay," — such is the bitter cry of comparison that breaks from the love-sick soliloquist, in one of the grandest poems of the English tongue, as, gazing upon the picture of exile his despair has conjured up, he first realizes in all its significance what life in the antipodes means to life at home. His second thought was

indeed better than his first intention. Five years of the life of Western civilization are certainly to be preferred to six spent in the far-East, from whatever standpoint we regard the two; for reduced to figures, this is the precise value of the above poetic ratio. Whether the poet intended so modest a comparison, may perhaps be doubted; but in the minds of many of his readers, at least, it assumes, with most appropriate Oriental disregard of time, proportions altogether different, and as against half a century of European action there seem to stretch away, in futile competition, long indefinite æons of far-Eastern uneventfulness.

A cycle of Cathay is a period of sixty years. Cathay was the name given to the Empire of China by the nearer East at the time when Marco Polo made his celebrated journey thither, and brought back to Europe the first direct news from the other side of our planet. The cycle of Cathay, then, is the Chinese cycle. Instead of one continuous series of years, starting from some marked event as a beginning, and advancing steadily forward, while at the same time this event serves as a point from which to reckon back, as is the case with Aryan or Semitic nations far enough advanced to reckon at all, the Chinese have used for ages, and as they pretend from their own dim origin, a recurrent cycle of sixty years to preserve the memory of the past. There is a touch of poetic justice in this measuring of time by a something which itself has neither beginning nor end, — which, though progressing ever, comes back again to its own starting-point at last. It is the carrying into an arbitrary apportionment of time the natural completeness of the year and of the day. A somewhat similar system is to be found in the Greek olympiads, with four in place of sixty. The cycles are looked upon as units, like our years; and in like manner to the years of other chronologies they are claimed to date from an initial epoch. This epoch differs, however,

from most other such epochs in that its cause is no definite, well-authenticated event, but the mythological beginning of the national existence. The reckoning partook of the nature of an *ex-post-facto* law, and was counted backward to what its makers imagined the remotest possible antiquity. The august Middle Kingdom has stooped to follow in its chronology the method pursued by certain apothecaries in the numbering of their prescriptions, who, instead of starting with the too suggestively initial number 1, commence their career with the more imposing figure 1,000, in order thus to delude a simple public into an unmerited confidence. This attempt to be chronologically exact about facts which preceded a chronology, is of itself suspicious. The dates of early Chinese history are generally disbelieved; and as we see, additional doubt gathers about them from the very mode by which they are computed. For the cycle itself in its composition suggests still further question.

The formation of the cycle is ingenious enough. Two elements enter to make it up, and each of these is a curious product of ancient thought, — the one of philosophic, the other of superstitious, origin. The first is a set of ten signs, formed as follows.

In Chinese philosophy there are two great principles, which we may designate as the male and the female.[1] From these two proceed the five elements, or terrestrial essences, — fire,

[1] The Koreans, at the time they adopted other Chinese customs, became students of Chinese philosophy. Converts are proverbially more zealous than those who inherit a belief. It is perhaps, therefore, not matter for surprise that in ardent admiration of this philosophy, they surpassed even their teachers. Now, in far-Eastern philosophy mystic symbols play a very important rôle. Among these, perhaps the most conspicuous is what is known in Japanese as a tomoye, a sort of scroll; but in origin it is not Japanese, but Chinese. It always lies coiled within a circle. Sometimes it is alone; sometimes two scrolls share the circle, sometimes three. The last is the commonest number in Japan. In Korea there are always two; and they represent the light and the shade, or the male and female principles of Chinese



water, wood, metal, and earth, — and each of these again may be looked upon as divided into the elder and the younger branch. By considering the five alternately in these two aspects, we obtain ten signs. This set is purely of Chinese conception, so far as is known.

About the other there is more question. Twelve signs compose it, known, for their employment also on shorter divisions of time, as the horary signs. Whether of Chinese invention or gifts from the invading Tartar hordes, is matter of doubt. If the latter, one of the few possessions the emigrants carried away with them from their man-producing but otherwise intellectually unproductive land were their household gods of time. Like our signs of the zodiac, to which same purpose they were also applied, they were a species of ideal menagerie, a grotesque assortment of beasts. Unlike ours, however, their connection with astronomy was one of matter-of-fact allusion rather than poetic illusion. The fertile but earth-begotten imaginations of early astronomers saw in the heavens the starry outlines of our own; but no one's fancy ever peopled the sky with these. They were of purely ideal creation, and embodied the admirations and fears more than the observations of the inventors. These twelve genii were the rat, the bull, the tiger, the hare, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the goat, the monkey, the fowl, the dog, and the wild boar.[1] The services this collection was

philosophy. They are called, in Korean, the Yang and the Yŏng. So attached are the Koreans to this symbol that it may be considered as their distinctive mark, or national badge. They so consider it themselves. It forms the centre of their national flag; adopted when they entered the world, just as before it formed the central figure of their Red Arrow Gates, the outer portal to all they revereneed. How the scroll originally came to be invented, nobody knows. In default of other proof, we may if we are fanciful, see in it the germs of this whole universe, folded, waiting to develop in the primordial circular seed.



[1] In Japanese the menagerie is arranged in a sort of distich, as follows: —

"Ne, ushi, tora, u, tatsŭ, mi,
Ŭma, hitsuji, saru, tori, inu, i."

called upon to render were as various as the collection is motley. Among other occupations was that of helping in the making of the cycle.

Now, suppose the two sets — the beasts and the qualified elements — arranged in parallel columns, each set repeated in its proper order in its own column, until at last the original combination is again reached. This will take place, of course, after six repetitions of the first set and five of the second. There will thus be formed sixty different combinations, — half the number of possible combinations of the several members of the two sets taken two at a time when no two of the same set are allowed to stand together. These sixty combinations, taken in their order, are then employed to designate sixty consecutive years, at the expiration of which time the cycle begins again. Each combination is simply a distinctive name for a particular year, and has no meaning in itself. "Elder earth monkey," for instance, is as unintelligible to a Chinaman as to us.

From China the system was forced upon Korea. In fact, one of the most important points in all the many treaties between the victorious Chinese and the vanquished Koreans was that the latter should receive annually from Pekin the Chinese calendar.

The first word of the first set, pronounced in Sinico-Korean "Kap," means "the beginning, the first;" and from this and the mode of formation, the cycle is called, in Korea, "Ryuk Kap," or "the six beginnings." In the same way the great anniversary of any event, which takes place when the year with the same name as the one in which the event happened returns again after the lapse of sixty years, is called "Whan Kap," or "the return of the beginning." This cyclical anniversary is an important matter in Korean social customs. It is faintly paralleled by our centennials, though it is much more of an event; for in Korea everything has its sextennial, and

as a sextennial is not only within the span of human life, which a centennial very seldom is, but, what is much more to the point, is often possible to the man himself for well-remembered and important acts of his life, — such, for instance, as his marriage, — it is observed with a personal enthusiasm which the anniversary of something of which the actors have all long since passed away can but rarely inspire. It is thus a diamond wedding and a centennial all in one.

The cycle is only one of the ways of reckoning the years in the peninsula. Designations for series of years are quite plenty. There is a second system, by which the years are called simply after the twelve signs endlessly repeated. The year of the tiger is a specially fortunate one to be born in. Then there is still a third way. The Koreans, though they were glad enough to take all its other time measures from the Middle Kingdom, only partially adopted the cycle. The truth is, the Korean kings had the display of their own power too much at heart. They preferred to stamp the years with their own dynastic seal. The years do not change with each new sovereign, but continue to increase as long as the dynasty lasts. The year 1883 of our chronology was the four hundred and ninety-second of the present dynasty.

Descending now from the larger division to the smaller, we come next to the year. As this is a natural unit, it cannot in the long run differ, the world over; but as our precision in the matter is wanting in the far-East, any given year may deviate considerably from the true. The reason of this inaccuracy lies in the attempt to combine lunations and years. Instead of intercalating days, as we do, they are obliged to wait till they can intercalate moons. The time of beginning, therefore, oscillates about a certain mean starting-point, with which it never coincides, and from which it may depart some fifteen days. This starting-point is placed at the latter end of January, so

that the Korean year begins about a month later than our own. Every year must consist of one whole number of lunations, — or moons, as in the language of the country they are more directly called. Now, as the time of a lunation is, roughly, twenty-nine and a half days, a thirteenth moon had from time to time to be intercalated. According to the well-known cycle of the moon, called "Saros," seven additional moons must be given to every nineteen years. Then, again, a lunation consisting of fractional days, — twenty-nine and a half, — the moons of the calendar are made, alternately, long moons of thirty days and short ones of twenty-nine. The first is a long month, called simply "great moon;" the second a short one, the third long, and so on. To make matters still further right, the intercalated moon is long or short, according as the reckoning is in retard or advance.

The moons are divided into three parts of ten days each; but such division is not much used, the days being commonly known by their position in the month. As for weeks, they were originally unknown throughout the far-East, and are still unknown in China and Korea. In Japan, in imitation of foreign custom, they have to a certain extent been introduced, and the days named, after the sun, moon, and fire elements, —

Sun day, Water day,
Moon day, Wood day,
Fire day, Metal day,
Earth day.

The week not only has no immediate phenomena to suggest it, except the approximate quarterings of the moon, but it has the disadvantage of introducing two incommensurate periods of time running on side by side with each other, so that neither in the past did it, nor as a result of Jesuitical teachings does it, commend itself to the far-Eastern mind.

The day is divided into twelve hours, each of which is thus twice as long as one of our own. It begins, like our civil

day, at midnight. Here appears again the catalogue of beasts. Besides the use already spoken of, there are three other important ways in which they are employed. These are all as angular measurements; but beyond the fact of a common circular conception, they are as heterogeneous as possible. The signs are: first, horary signs; secondly, zodiacal signs; and thirdly, points of the compass. There is, for instance, the hour of the rat, the sun's place in the rat, and the direction of the rat. The first is midnight; the second marks the beginning of the year, and the third denotes the north. The Koreans have no watches nor clocks. If they had, we might suppose that the rotations had been based upon them; for the first and third are what are technically known as left-handed rotations, — that is, rotations in the same direction in which the hands of a clock move. Thus in the compass the order of the signs — the rat, the bull, etc. — move round from the north through the north-northeast and so on south and west, north again. The number of divisions adopted is unfortunate; for the points of the compass naturally divide themselves into subdivisions of four, while there are twelve signs to represent them. To designate a cardinal point, therefore, as the east, a compound of two of them has to be employed, and the point is called "the direction of the tiger-hare." The needle they regard as pointing to the south.

Each hour is divided into eight parts, which are again subdivided into fifteen. Hence these last are exactly equivalent to our minutes in length.

Connected with the subject of time is that of people's ages. Here impersonality steps in again in a sadly autocratic way. There is in use a sort of Procrustean measure of life, to which everybody is fitted for greater convenience. An individual reckoning of one's age is accounted an unnecessary luxury; one measure is quite sufficient for all, and the smallest division

recognized is the year. The moment an infant is born he is said to be a year old; and he continues, in easy simplicity of calculation, to be this age until the coming of the next New Year. With the first day of the New Year he, together with everybody else in the community, advances a peg. By a sudden jump he finds himself promoted to the dignity of a second year, although he may chance to have been born only the evening before. An infant is thus from his birth preternaturally old. He may be two years older than he is, and he must be one. The sedate, almost sad look of age in Japanese babykind, so striking to all foreigners, is undoubtedly an attempt on the part of the little ones to seem what they are considered to be. On the average, then, a year and a half must be deducted from the age anybody calls himself, to find out how old he really is.

Time in the far-East is not money. It is only very roughly a measure of value; and in no sense whatever is it a medium of exchange, for it is valueless.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A PREDICAMENT.

THE longing had been growing within me to return once more into the world from which we spring, and to which we hardly realize how much we hold until we are cut off from it, — the great world of the thought of our day. The mind craves surroundings which are like unto itself. We speak of being "homesick;" the more impersonal Frenchman calls his feeling "one's country sick;" and in so utterly impersonal a land as Korea we might well coin a new expression, and write "world-sick" for that yearning for the like and the familiar that will not be stilled. The feeling is none the less strong for being less particular. However kind, considerate, loving, those who surround us may be, the soul at last turns even from love toward the still greater craving to be understood.

Kindness itself the Koreans were. Whenever I mentioned the word "departure," Hong was ready with an infinity of excellent reasons why that particular time was most unpropitious for going away, and I must stay. So I stayed; and the weeks lengthened out into months, and the spring came on steadily meanwhile, with the increasing days.

On one of these days the geometer came to see me, and appeared even more genial than usual. His half-suppressed delight was partially explained on his drawing forth from his sleeve a little box, which he handed to me as a token of

affectionate thought, and begged me to open. I did so, and discovered two large gilt pills. Whether I had had a slight cold on the occasion of his last visit, or whether this attention was due simply to a general medicinal appropriateness to the season of the year, I do not clearly remember. Rather to his chagrin, instead of swallowing them on the spot, I carefully did them up again (they were far too beautiful to be eaten, besides being uncertain and unnecessary), and put them aside to keep. Their efficacy should have been above scepticism, however; for if ever nostrums came heralded with vouchers, they did. In Korea, medicine is an heirloom from hoary antiquity. An apothecary's shop there needs not to adorn itself with external and irrelevant charms, like the beautiful purple jar that so deceived poor little Rosamond. Upon eminent respectability alone, it bases its claim to custom; and its traditions are certainly convincing. Painted upon suitable spots along the front of the building runs the legend, Sin Nong Yu Ör, — that is, "the profession left behind by Sin Nong." This eminent person was a "spiritual agriculturist," the discoverer of both agriculture and medicine; and the pills sold in the shops to-day are supposed to be the counterparts of those invented by him. Worthily to render the legend, we ought to translate it, "Jones, successor to Æsculapius."

But at last I could no longer postpone my postponements, and a day was fixed,—a day which to them too was in some sort to be a day of departure, for they had resolved to accompany me to the seashore to say farewell.

There are several distinct, or rather individual but indistinct, roads from Söul to Chemulpo. Fortunately, I was aware of this fact before we started; but I acquired much more accurate information about it, unfortunately, in the course of the day. The eventful morning dawned brighter and warmer than any of its predecessors, and tinged with a fitting sort of farewell

glory the empty house and the bustling courtyard. Within, the littered floors spoke reproachfully of desertion; and the rooms whose fittings, for the partial absence of furniture, had been so largely personal, were left all the more desolate now that these were gone. Without, the piles of baggage were slowly being eaten into by the numerous porters, while people who came to say good-by threaded their way through them as best they might. But there was little leave-taking here, because so many were to go to Chemulpo. There was only the place itself to bid good-by to. Its austere grandeur had put on the warm spring sunshine of a smile. Perhaps, too, a little parting sentiment was not out of place, in order to see it as one who had been almost a Korean should, that thus he might appreciate it with that becoming fervor which caused the compiler of my Korean atlas to break forth, in peroration, in his description of the place, into the following rhapsody: —

"In the midst of all these provinces lies the Korean Light. All the mountain-ranges converge to this; to this run all the streams. The origin of all the latitudes, the origin of all the longitudes, traverse this point. Indeed, it is the centre of all and everything. It has the Flowery Mountain standing at its north. It has the Korean River running at its south. It takes in the Watch-Gate Peak at its left. It makes the Flowing Sea encircle it on its right. Its people all enjoy the blessings of peace; and their customs are the result of their highest culture. Moreover, the roads to the metropolis — all of them — are straight; and upright is the throne that faces to the south. It is like unto the capital of China under the dynasty Shu. Such capitals as the Eastern Watch-Gate or the Western Watch-Gate of China are not even to be compared with it. The Heavenly Metropolis! The Golden Castle! In truth, we should congratulate it for the greatness it has had, and that it will have forever. Ah! what a greatness!"

We made what is known as a flying start, — that is, we all got off when we pleased; for whether the last caught up with the first before tiffin or not mattered but little, as travelling in covered palanquins is not at best conducive to great sociability, and we knew that when the first should stop to dine, the others must necessarily overtake them. It so turned out that I and my Japanese secretary brought up the rear. Then, from having to go to one or two places in the city off the direct road, we got still further belated. The last of these visits happening to lie near the Southwest Gate caused us to leave town by it rather than by the more customary Southern one. From these two gates to the various ferries is a very criss-cross of paths, so that a departure by the one does not necessitate a failure to turn up safely at the other's more proper ferry. This I was anxious to do, as I was not so familiar with the paths on the other side of the river. For a change I was mounted on a Korean pony in tow of a coolie, who walked in front dragging the connecting rope, while my young Japanese, from not having as yet fully recovered from a long and serious illness, was bundled snugly up in a box. Slow as the horse was, he was so much faster than the chair-bearers that I soon lost sight of them behind. We — the tow-coolie and I — plodded methodically forward, but still without turning in the slightest to the left, as we should have done, so I reasoned, to take us to the other, the commoner ferry. I said nothing, for I supposed the coolie knew what he was about. Still, I became sufficiently uneasy to be continually on the lookout for signs that the others had taken the same route I was then travelling; because, for all I knew to the contrary, the coolie might be simply following instructions they had given him. Once I had a painful disheartenment from being the victim of illusive appearances. Among my baggage somewhere on the road, I knew, was a large Korean wardrobe, or chest of drawers, which my hosts

had had made for me, and which, among other slight souvenirs, I had decided to take away. On descending a certain hill I thought I descried it ahead; and I rejoiced in spirit, not so much for its own safety as for affording me at least a probability that the rest of the company had gone this way. But, alas! on a nearer approach, I perceived it to be only somebody else's bit of furniture.

Finally we reached the river, and, in fulfilment of my worst suspicions, at the upper ferry. Not liking over much the situation, I waited here some time for the box with the Japanese; but as it failed to make its appearance, I at last reluctantly crossed on one of the boats. I was so absorbed in the gathering gloom of uncertainty that I quite omitted to pay the ferryman for his service, — a customary civility, the omission of which caused me much pain when I suddenly awoke to the consciousness of what I had done, after I had got half a mile off. However, as officials always cross in this lordly way, it was not so cavalier a proceeding, I reflected self-consolingly, as it seemed. Arrived on the farther bank, we turned off to the right, and then bent more and more away from the line of the other road, while my uneasiness grew with each new mile we put between where we were and where I would be. Nothing was to be seen of the Japanese; and whenever I tried to interview the coolie, he replied that it was all right, — it was the road to Chemulpo. To know that it was the road to Chemulpo was something; but did it connect before this eventual bourne with the other one, which I began to be more and more sure was the one the rest of them had taken? This I could not find out; and still we kept getting farther and farther from it. I thought of taking the law, represented by the tow-rope, into my own hands and striking across the fields; but no sooner had I nearly resolved to do so than I was checked by the second thought that perhaps by so doing I was abandoning

the true short-cut for an impossible bit of country. It became unpleasantly evident that for some time, if not for all day, I was to be sufficient unto myself; so I proceeded to hunt in my pockets for a cigar, to help my meditation and take the place of the food I was not going to get. To my horror, I had not one left. Here was a tragic situation! Unfortunately, it was real. No tobacco! And then, as a minor inconvenience, no food! For only in the direst extremity would I have taken what could be got by the way, which the Koreans, in a manner that unpleasantly suggested infancy, called "pap."

Here was a ridiculous situation for a man to find himself in. To be lost going into a strange country would have been perhaps pardonable, but to be lost coming out was preposterous; and all because the coolie was a first-class automaton, over which I had little or no control. I seemed to myself like a man in an elevator he is unable to stop. The automaton at the end of the tow-rope was wound up to go to Chemulpo, and go he would; and I followed,—a prey alternately to dread lest by keeping on I might be going farther astray, and fear that if I turned back I should miss the only possible exit.

So matters continued till the coolie stopped at a wayside restaurant to refresh himself with "pap." I seized the opportunity to question the bystanders on the, to me, all-absorbing subject of information, by drawing diagrams on the ground with a stick. By this efficient method I discovered that there was no connecting road this side of Chemulpo. There was nothing for it then but to return on my traces a short distance back, and then strike across country on guesswork. This the coolie, whose sole idea was to get to Chemulpo, was even more loath to do than the horse, who had the same idea of the necessity for proceeding straight forward, but much less bigotedly developed. But by dint of determination, supplemented by a free use of my whip, we all three soon found ourselves threading

our way on top of one of the raised paths through the rice-fields, with an uncomfortably speedy prospect of even this slender assistance giving out.

After a half-mile or so it did come to an end; and then I was as completely at sea on land as a man can well be, and the coolie knew less about our whereabouts than I. Whenever we struck a road that headed in the direction of Chemulpo, he was for taking it instead of continuing on at right angles. I began myself to alternate between despair that the main road was very far off and fear lest I should not recognize it when I struck it. Of course, therefore, long before I expected it we came out upon it, and I knew it at once.

Once on the path, I became a prey to another fear. I began to be afraid that I was so far behind that I should never catch up with the Koreans; for by this time they had got a long start of me. I had not been on it five minutes when luckily I met a Japanese in a chair bound up to Söul. I clutched him, as it were, so glad I felt, and extracted from him the happy news that a band answering my description were resting a short distance in advance of me; and sure enough there they still were as I rose, after descending a gully, to a view ahead. I should like to say I clapped spurs to my horse, for I heartily wished I could have done so at the time; but the expression would be grossly exaggerated, for any such speed was utterly out of the question. But I did manage, I remember, to cause the beast to exceed the orthodox walk, and was welcomed, as I jumped off, as one come back from the dead.

The rest of the journey was uneventful enough. At the top of a little ravine stood the same old man, the sign-post; and I fancied he leered in grotesque recognition as we passed; but it may have been the effect of the sunlight.

Just as the sun was going down we topped the last rise, and saw the sea below us. There in the offing lay the steamer we

had come to meet; for in leaving Söul even after the spring had opened, one had to wait till the news that a steamer was in had reached the Japanese legation in the capital. Otherwise, whoever went down on the chance might have to wait forever at Chemulpo; for at the time of which I write no postal arrangements bound Korea to the rest of the world. It was all a private matter of the Japanese legation. The moment a vessel arrived at Chemulpo, a courier was despatched up to them at Söul, and returned the next day with their despatches home. As soon as the courier reached them, they kindly informed the few other foreigners of the fact, and took charge of any letters they might have to send.

There she lay, the messenger from the outer world. She turned out not to be the boat we thought she was when we left Söul. But the boat we expected from Nagasaki arrived the next day, so that our stay in Chemulpo was short; and we were again the guests of the kindly consul.

That night Hong gave us a farewell feast in one of the Japanese restaurants, of mushroom growth. The pretty "nesan," with their artificial toddle and bashful "hé's," seemed already a foretaste of the future in the midst of this mournfully jovial ending of the past.

The next day Hong returned to the capital; and the day after from the steamer's deck I watched the coast recede, while the Cock's-comb, towering higher above the nearer hills as we got farther and farther away, as if to mark where Söul the secluded lay, lingered with us till we were far at sea.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE BEACONS OF PUSAN.

I AWOKE, on the morning of the second day, to find myself in the harbor of Fusan. Long before I had reached the fully conscious state, I knew the fact, from the absence of motion and the increase in noise. Things around me were at once both more quiet and less so. The world of Nature, represented by our little cosmos of a vessel, had stopped, and in some subtle manner of its own had transferred all its momentum undiminished to a world of men; and these last were now squandering a part of their inherited energy in tramping, as it seemed to me aimlessly, over my head.

I dressed, and went on deck. It was a lovely spring morning, and for the second time I looked around me, as I had looked months before, on the amphitheatre of hills. Then all had been new and stern and cold, — a landscape that had seemed to forbid my rash intrusion. Now the very air wafted me welcome, and in patches on the hills the grass was already green. It was another year. I little dreamed then that this year would go out in blood, and that those who had so lately bidden me good-by would not live to see its close, — that the spirits of those who stayed behind, like the spirit of him who went away, should together this year pass away from Korea.

We were to lie there at anchor all day; so after breakfast I went ashore. The town had changed but little. There was

the same crowd to see me land, the same idlers in the square, and the same Korean venders of knick-knacks, squatting beside their goods spread out before them on the ground. Only the eyes with which I saw it all had changed. What then had seemed to me so odd no longer struck me as in any way peculiar. I had ceased to notice. The dawn of acquaintance had broadened into the noonday light of familiarity, and the contrasts had disappeared in the glare.

J——, I learned, was still in the Customs; and there I found him at his desk, grown now an old *habitué* of the place. He promised to tiffin with me, and at the hour agreed upon we met in the same restaurant we had dined in when I went away. Nothing had been changed. The same tea-house girl waited on us, and remembered that she had done so in the past. Only the manner of her hair showed that she had since been married. Through the opened *shoji* we saw the sunlight of the street below, the trees just answering the warmth, the Japanese wending their ways hither and thither, and stopping, with their ceremonious bows, as they met a friend, to chat awhile. Inconsequently we fell to talking of the past, — of the winter that had gone, of the new of a few months before so soon become the old, and, paradoxically, of what had been in a place whose career was only just opening to the world. Then the present itself became a past. He returned to his post, and I wandered up to the top of the little hill in front and sat down on the grass.

To all imaginative people it is not so much what they are saying good-by to as the fact that they are saying good-by which touches them at the moment. It is only after the fact that they awake, as it were, to the magnitude of their loss; at the time the indefinite sentiment largely drowns the personal regret. There is nothing new in all this, — it is as old as poetry; but perhaps it will explain why I sat so long on the grass looking

at the blue sea, while the wind caressingly wooed the land back again to warmth, and why, when later I stood on the deck of the steamer bidding my few friends in Fusan good-by, I felt strangely the severing of the last strand of a tie which, for comfort at least, had not been wholly a chain of roses.

Perhaps, also, it will explain why, as night fell, I might have been caught leaning with my arms on the rail, my head in my hands, staring long and earnestly at the Korean hills as they sank slowly into the west. I had come up to pace the deck. I looked about me. We were already well at sea, and steaming fast across the straits for the islands of Japan. For a moment it came over me with a sense of power, — this vessel, solitary in the vast gloaming; and then instinctively my thoughts, and I their creature, turned back again toward the land I was leaving. My walk slackened, stopped; I rested one hand upon the rail, and stood still there — gazing.

I was alone on deck. The crew, as is their wont at times, had mysteriously vanished. There was no one near to check the current of memories that swept over me, or break in upon my farewell reverie with Korea. The ship seemed deserted. Only the throb of the engine and the long streamer of smoke hurrying ceaselessly to leeward spoke to me of a presence other than my own. It jarred upon me, — this breathing monster with its counterfeit humanity, — till at last its very pulse-like rhythm brought with it oblivion to its presence, and I forgot it.

I seemed to be all alone with the distant land. Over against me rose the hills along the coast, there in the twilight, across the waters. Peaceful, calm, already like to their own memory they seemed; and all the more a phantasm that the sea was rough. A stiff breeze was blowing in from the southward, and the wind tossed the water into restless crests and hollows, and blew intrusively across my face the salt smell of the ocean. A

sense of separation lay in it, such as no placid sea could give. The assertion of its existence, brooking no ignoring, raised of itself a barrier to the mind, and separated me, to fancy no less surely than in fact, from the far black profile of the hills. I clung to it all the more longingly, — this profile, — as one hangs over the picture of a friend when the man himself can be seen no more. The glory, as it lingered in the west, touched the clouds with color, and threw the hills into ever-deepening silhouettes against the sky. It set them in a framing of crimson; the crimson turned to violet, and then the violet disappeared in ash. The sunset was gone. Yet the pitiless sea stayed not. Slowly, steadily, inch by inch, it crept up along the dark line of their bases, robbing me of all that alone remained to me of Korea. But night, in her compassion, was swifter than even the all-devouring sea. The past was not thus, piecemeal, to disappear. It should be taken as it was, entire, that it might remain, in all its beauty, a memory forever; and so she threw over the hills her mantle of darkness, and gathered them, safe from harming change, to thought-land away.

Still I stood motionless, gazing after what had been, filled with that vague expectancy begotten of desire, as if that which we know has departed could, at our wish, were it only strong enough, be brought back again to life, — if only we might once more see what but now has vanished never to return. The light had gone from the western sky, the sea had turned to a sullen black save where it still gave out a phosphorescent shimmer of its own, and the stars glimmered faintly forth through a soft thin haze, when from amid the pall-like darkness, as if in response to my yearning, of a sudden I saw come out, high up where the mountain-side had vanished, two glowing deep-red balls of flame. What were they — these answers to my call, these mysterious glow-fires so different from all around — that had suddenly, silently looked out into the night? They were

not stars. They were too lurid, too large, too human. Then it flashed across me. They were the beacons above Pusan; and with a rush of memory, I bethought me what they meant. At this very moment the message from the coast was speeding inland. A few moments more, and the watchfires on Nam San would tell the capital of the scene about me. Could they not, would they not, tell her of the wanderer too? They were human-born; they seemed human-like; and I felt them, like two great eyes fastened on me from out the gloom. To others they spoke only of peace, of quiet; but to me they seemed to have come to bid farewell, and as I looked up at them I felt they were also looking down on me.

For a long while I leaned there, my eyes looking into theirs till I seemed to read their soul. It was the spirit of the land, looking after me through the night; and its spirit entered into mine. Motionless, I watched them; motionless, they answered me. Time, unheeded, passed away; and still their deep-set fire glowed on into my very being. It was getting late. I roused myself from my reverie. The sea struck me with a chill; but as I turned lingeringly away, the eyes still followed me in the distance, and bade me in their glow, so like a human glance, not Farewell, but from a foreign land, GOOD-NIGHT!

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

A.

ON THE POPULATION OF KOREA.

MONEY being more important to the Korean official oligarchy than men, the amount of taxable property in the kingdom, represented principally by rice-fields, is much more accurately known than is the number of its inhabitants. No census of the population is ever taken, the number of houses alone being counted. The estimate formed recently by a Japanese paper is probably the nearest yet made to the truth. This estimate gave Korea 12,000,000 inhabitants.

As for Söul, the aggregation of population, including both the city proper, — that is, the part within the wall, — and the outlying suburbs, will probably not exceed in all 250,000 souls. The amount of ground covered is about ten square miles. But a city of the far-East extends only in two dimensions, not as with us in three. Tokio, in Japan, with about 1,200,000 inhabitants, covers eighty square miles.

The fabulously large estimated populations of Chinese cities — as, for instance, Canton — will, I think, on a trustworthy census be found to have been greatly exaggerated.

B.

ON THE NAME OF THE LAND.

THE name the Koreans give their land is Chosön. By way of forestalling any want of appreciation on the part of others, they also call it Tè Chosön, — Tè signifying "great." This is at once its oldest and its newest name. It was so called previous to the tenth century, and the old name was revived on the coming in of the present dynasty in 1391. In the interim the kingdom was called Koryö, whence our name, Korea.

The designation "the Korea" (which one sometimes hears) is simply a mistake founded upon too literal a translation of the French "La Corée." The expression is as un-English as it would be to speak of "the Germany" or "the Russia." A kindred error is found in the expression "the Morea," which should, of course, be simply "Morea."

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